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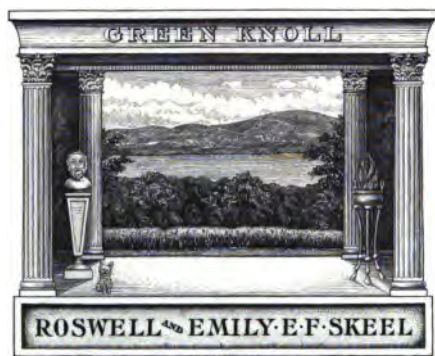
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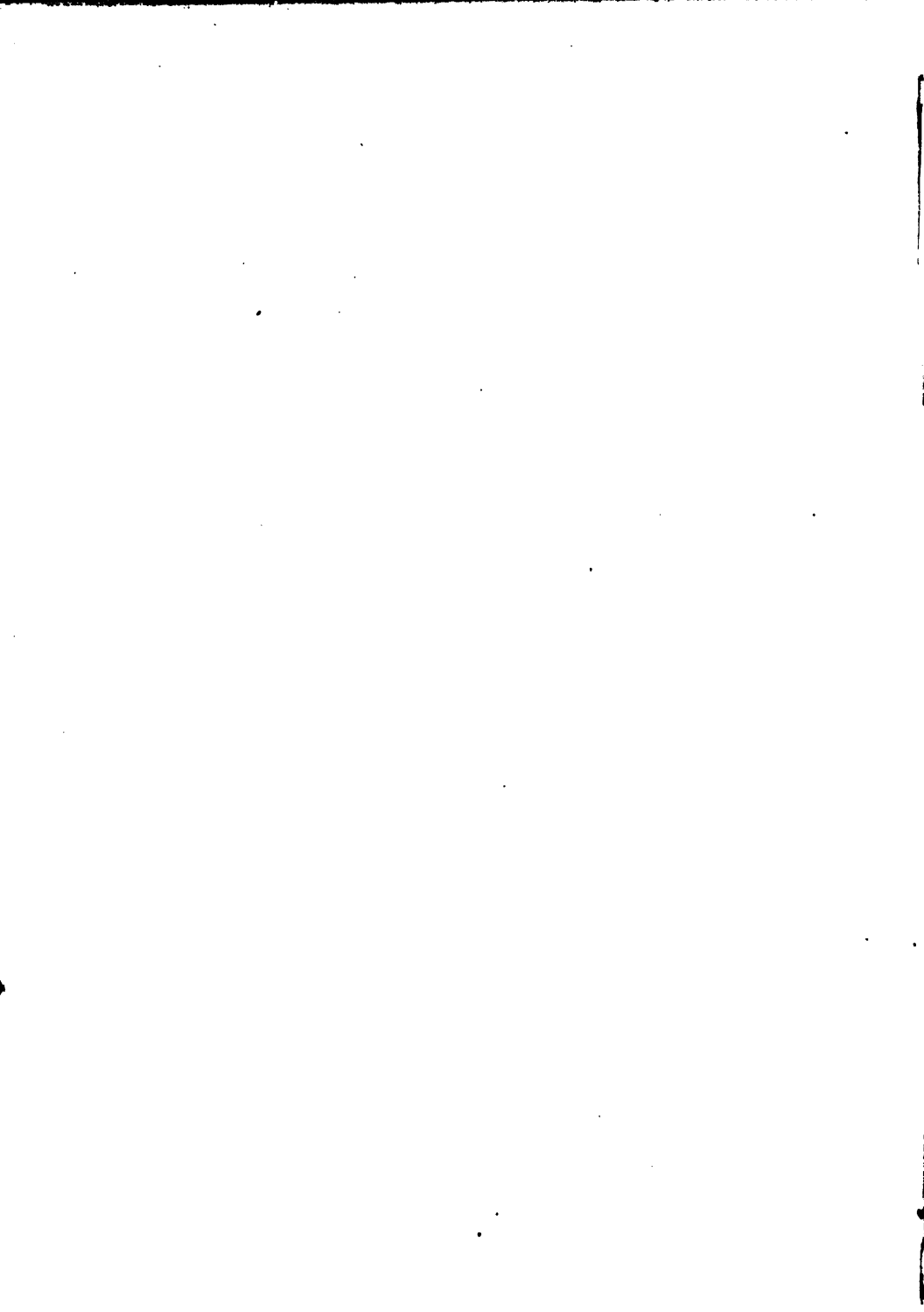


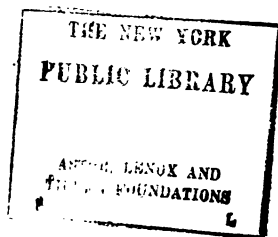
THE GORDON LESTER FORD
COLLECTION
FROM EMILY E. F. SKEEL
IN MEMORY OF
ROSWELL SKEEL, JR.
AND THEIR FOUR PARENTS

Roswell & Emily E. F. Keel

October, 1903.

W. L.
B. W. V.
W. L.





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The Romance of the House of Savoy

1003-1519

By

Alethea Wiel

Author of "The Story of Venice," "Vittoria Colonna,"
"Two Doges of Venice," etc.

First Volume

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To
MARGARET OF SAVOY, QUEEN OF ITALY,
WHO IMPARTS A NEW GLORY TO THE HISTORY OF HER
GLORIOUS HOUSE, THESE PAGES, GRACIOUSLY
ACCEPTED BY HER MAJESTY, ARE
DEDICATED BY THE
AUTHOR

PREFACE

THE history of the House of Savoy has running through its pages so large an element of romance, that no excuse need be urged for dwelling almost exclusively on the dramatic side of its story. The object of this book is to place before the English reader in the introductory chapter a short and concise history of the House from its earliest times down to the present day ; and then in the body of the work to enlarge upon the chief personages who by the greatness and picturesqueness of their lives appeal most to the imagination.

The author has dealt principally with the anecdotal character of these princes and princesses, and enlarged and dilated on the personal doings and experiences of these "high dames and mighty earls" rather than on their political lives. This detailed section of the present work deals

only with the period commencing with the eleventh century, and concludes with the early part of the fifteenth century.

These studies are based upon the most reliable works of ancient and modern historians.

My heartfelt thanks are due to Comm. Barone Domenico Carutti di Cantogno, the courteous and learned librarian of the King's private library at Turin, whose kindness, advice, and assistance have been of untold advantage to me. I must also acknowledge the amiability shown by Professore Cav. Francesco Carta, Librarian of the Biblioteca Nazionale of Turin, in helping me to choose and to secure the books needed for my researches. My indebtedness to the late Comm. Federico Stefani, of the State Archives in Venice, for his unfailing kindness in lending me books, can now only be acknowledged by adding my tribute to the honoured memory of one whom Venice and the literary world must ever mourn. To Count Nicolo Papadopoli my cordial thanks are due for his courtesý in present-

ing me with sketches taken from his valuable numismatic collection.

The illustrations are from photographs taken by Oreste Bertani, and from drawings by Giovanni Pellegrini, both of Venice, and are selected from the following works : *Theatrum (Novum) Pedemontii et Sabaudiae : Hagae Comitum*, Christoph. Rutger, MDCCXXVI ; *Ferrerus Franc. M. Augustae Regiaeque Sabaudiae Domus Arbor Gentilitia ; Augustae Taurinorum*, Jo. Bapt. Zappata, MDCCII ; Litta, *Famiglie Celebri* ; Guichenon, *Royale Maison de Savoye*.

The idea of the book originated with my husband, and to him a gratitude beyond words is due for constant help and invaluable advice.

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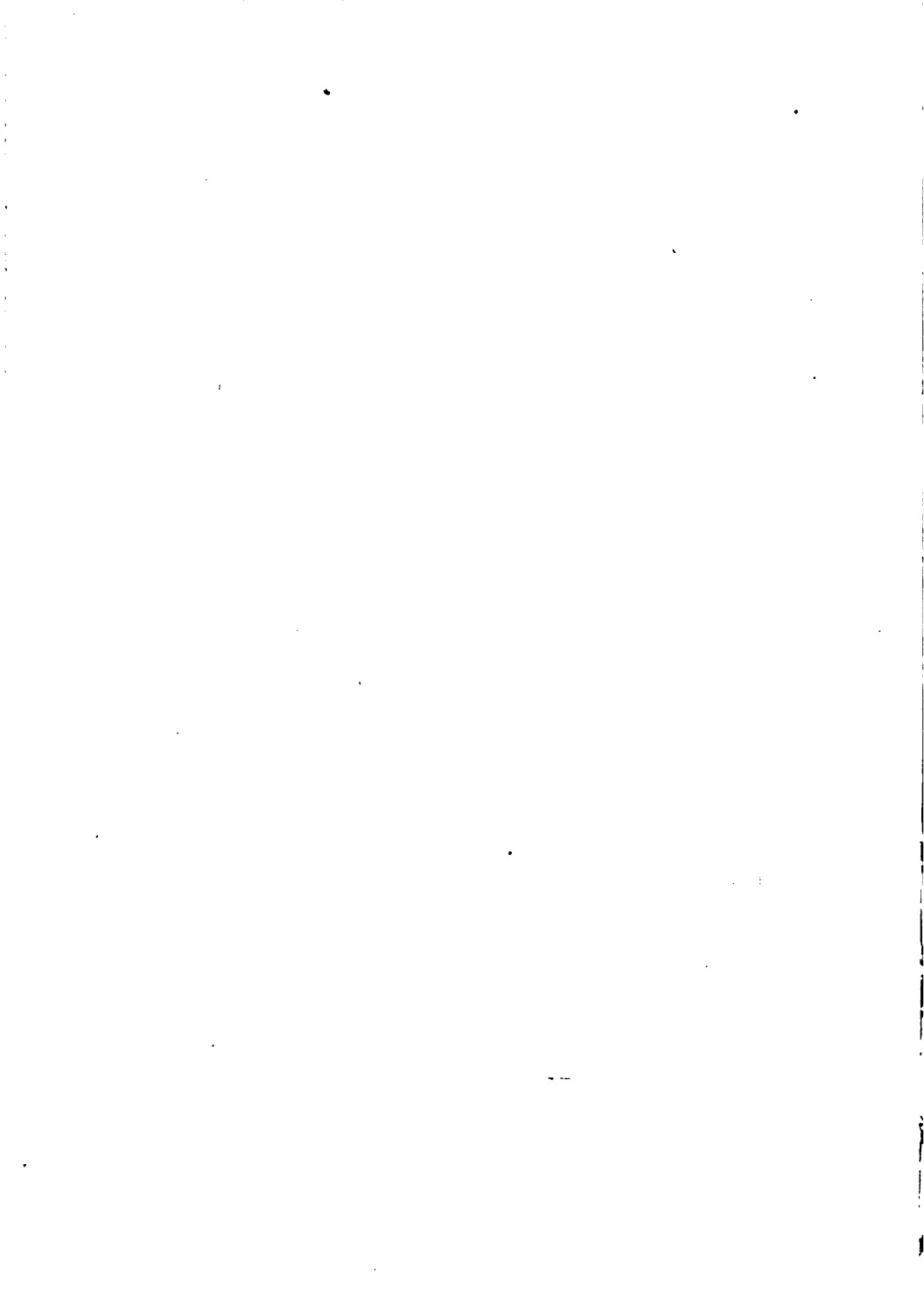
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THE ROMANCE OF THE HOUSE OF SAVOY

INTRODUCTION

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF SAVOY FROM
ITS EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT
DAY. (1003-1896.)

THE oldest reigning dynasty in Europe is the House of Savoy. This distinction is further enhanced by the grace and poetry associated with its antiquity of lineage, which lend to the pages of its history a unique interest and charm. The very name of its founder is suggestive of romance and poetic association; around the origin of Umberto delle Bianchemani, or Humbert of the White Hands, arise legends and myths which envelop him in mystery, and complete the attraction which belongs to all that is ancient.

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2 The House of Savoy

The names of his parents, the land that gave him birth, the language that he spoke,—all are matters for conjecture. It is still uncertain whether he was descended from a German or an Italian ancestor; and though he cannot be assigned to race or nationality, the appearance of Humbert of the White Hands on the platform of history is universally acknowledged to have taken place about the year 1003, when his staunch allegiance to the German Emperor gained for him the imperial favour that contributed materially to consolidate the rising fortunes of his house. His title of Count of Savoy, borne for the first time in 1036, was confirmed by Conrad the Salic, and other honours were bestowed on him by the same monarch, whose gratitude to his loyal and powerful vassal was continued during the whole of his life.

But Humbert did not trust solely to imperial help for the furtherance of his aims; he took even more effective measures to establish his dynasty, the chief being the marriage between his son Oddone

and Adelaide, Countess of Turin, the daughter and sole heiress of Odelrico Manfredi II., Marquis of Susa.

Adelaide inherited from her father numerous lands and townships in the provinces of Vercelli, Ivrea, Asti, Albenga, Alba, Ventimiglia, Parma, Piacenza, Pavia, and Acqui. When to these possessions were added those of Nyon, Aosta, Moriana, Savoy, Belley, Chablais, and Tarantasia, which Humbert bequeathed to his son, it will be seen how vast a region was brought under the rule of one family, and how firm a basis was laid for a future kingdom.

The uncertainty that surrounds the early life of Count Humbert continues to envelop his manhood and death. The date of his death is given only as after the year 1056; while the sole mention of his wife is that her name was Ancilla (but of what country or family no statement is made) and that she bore him four sons. These sons were Amadeus, Oddone, Burcardo, and Aimone; the two former succeeded their father, and the two latter became bishops.

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History relates little of Amadeus I., sur-named "di Coda," or "of the Tail," besides the origin of this surname. When Amadeus went to Verona to join the Emperor, Henry III. of Germany, then on his way to Rome to be crowned as Cæsar, his followers were so numerous that the imperial chamberlains refused to allow them to enter the audience-chamber. Amadeus declared that he would not appear before Henry unless accompanied by all his "codazzo," or suite; the Emperor gave orders that his stipulation should be complied with. From this occurrence he received his surname. His wife's name was Adalgilda or Adele, but nothing more is known of her. They had one son, Humbert, who died in youth.

Oddo, or Oddone, who succeeded Amadeus I., is indiscriminately called the second, third, and fourth son of Humbert of the White Hands. He shines by a reflected glory as "the husband of his wife," for his marriage is dwelt upon as the chief event of his reign and as being the foundation of the greatness of the House of

Savoy. His wife, as has been said, was Adelaide, Countess of Turin ; her father, the descendant of Arduino, King of Italy, was at that moment one of the richest and most powerful of the Italian princes. The date of Adelaide's birth is unknown, but before she married Oddone she had been twice a widow, her first husband having been Herman, Duke of Swabia, who died in 1038, and her second, Henry of Aleramo, a family from whom sprang the Marquises of Montferrat. She had no children by either of her earlier marriages ; but by her last, which took place about 1045, she had three sons and two daughters. Left a widow for the third time, for Oddone died about 1060, Adelaide ruled over her own and her husband's dominions with energy and wisdom, and devoted herself to the education of her children with all the vigour of her great mind. Her three sons were Peter, Amadeus, and Oddone, the two eldest of whom reigned as Counts of Savoy ; her daughters were Bertha and Adelaide, the elder married to Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, the younger to Rudolph of Swabia.

Adelaide was in every respect fitted to rule over the many states which owned her sway. She was a devoted follower and patroness of the Church, when ecclesiastical interests did not clash with her own, ambitious, domineering, and never allowing her heart to overrule her head. A proof of this is to be found in her behaviour to her two sons-in-law, one of whom, Rudolph, was a model husband, while the other, Henry IV. of Germany, was stained with every conjugal vice. In all political questions Adelaide supported Henry, even to the detriment of Rudolph, perceiving that Henry was endowed with better gifts of administration, and resolving to overlook his private shortcomings out of consideration for his qualities as a statesman. In 1076, excommunicated by Gregory VII., Henry had to apply to his mother-in-law for leave to pass through her dominions on his way to Italy, whither he had to go to sue for pardon from the offended Pontiff. This permission Adelaide granted, on condition that Henry should cede to her the province of Bugey.

When he had complied, she joined the party formed by the Emperor, his wife, and infant son, and proceeded to Canossa, where Gregory was staying as the guest of the Countess Mathilde of Tuscany. Henry's humiliation bears upon the history of Savoy, since the influence of the Countess Adelaide was of great avail in procuring the reconciliation between the Pope and the Emperor, and is to be reckoned as the first transaction in international politics in which the House of Savoy took part.

But Adelaide was far from being a blind partisan of the Church. She asserted her views in opposition to those of the Holy See whenever she judged it expedient. This was particularly the case in her treatment of the town of Asti, which she gave over to the flames in order to induce the citizens to readmit as their bishop one Girlemo, who had been anathematised by Pope Nicholas II., and, consequently, expelled by the people of Asti from his diocese. The same fate befell the town in the following year, when Adelaide, to re-

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press the inhabitants who had risen against her, caused Asti to be burned again.

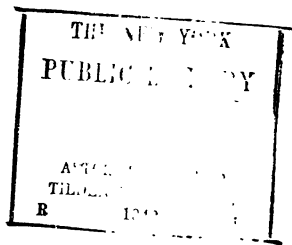
Adelaide died in 1091 at Camischio, in the province of Ivrea, and was followed by two of her sons in succession, Peter I. and Amadeus II. Of them no great acts are recorded.

Before considering the history of the House of Savoy under the rule of Adelaide's successors, some attention must be given to the geographical position of the country. It was the location of Savoy on the map of Europe which principally influenced her transactions with other Powers and, according to most of her historians, was responsible for the policy, often stigmatised as perfidious, which prompted the dealings of her rulers. Ricotti, indeed, declares that the value of geography in explaining the story of each and every nation is doubled when we use it in accounting for the vicissitudes which the Piedmontese monarchy has passed through in its rise, duration, and extension.¹

Placed in the very heart of the Alps,

¹ Ricotti, *Ricordi*.





extending northward toward France and southward toward Italy, Savoy was strongly affected in her policy by her position ; for possible annihilation kept her in an attitude of constant deference toward one or the other of her neighbours, and excuses to some extent the vacillating policy for which she is so often reproached.

On the other hand, Savoy knew well how to turn to account the possession of the principal passes of the Alps. These passes, consisting of the Great and the Little St. Bernard, and of the Mont Cenis, led through the Val d'Aosta directly into Italy. They gave her an entrance into the land from whence her true greatness was ultimately to spring. The region, too, is watered by numerous rivers which, besides possessing fertilising properties, acted as highroads by which the Counts of Savoy could traverse their dominions. Though as yet she possessed no outlet by sea, this disadvantage was removed when Savoy enlarged her borders into Piedmont, and, taking control of the Cottian and Maritime Alps, stretched out

toward Provence, Nice, and the coast of the Mediterranean. The events of later days having wrested Provence and much of the seaboard from Savoyard rule, the wisdom of steadily opening out their territory in the direction of Italy commended itself to the princes of Savoy, and led them ultimately to occupy those Cisalpine dominions over which their descendants reign to this day.

The Savoyard territory thus lying between France and Italy, the country for centuries was divided between French and Italian interests and sympathies. The renunciation to France of Nice and Savoy may find compensation in diverting the attention of Italy from ground which is geographically beyond her control, and in the concentration of her energies and resources.

In her progress towards full development and security, Savoy passed through six stormy periods : the epoch of the "Investiturestreit," a contention between the Pope and the Empire as to the right of investiture ; the conflict between the Empire

and the Communes ; the struggle between feudalism and the communal institutions then arising in every part of Piedmont ; the troubles in which France was involved with the Visconti and the Sforza ; the wars between France and Spain following the decay of Milan ; and, finally, the struggle between the feudal tradition of military monarchism and the French Revolution.

The princes of Savoy adopted a notable policy in conciliating the Communes ; this was initiated by Humbert II. (1080), and Amadeus III. (1095), and was very vigorously carried into effect by Thomas I. (1178).¹ Most of their successors followed this policy, which was not even dreamt of in other parts of Italy, where the Signories put down the Communes only to be themselves put down by a tyrant or lord who then reigned despotically. The blending of mutual rights and interests gave to each party unqualified strength and unity, and enabled the small states of Savoy and Piedmont to make

¹ See Appendix.

headway successively against the power of France, Germany, and Spain, and to attain at last the exalted position of a united Italian kingdom. Many a struggle took place before the House of Savoy was firmly established upon the basis which led to this result.

Count Thomas I., son of Humbert III., "the Saint," succeeded to the family honours in 1189. His deeds, together with those of his sons, drew the eyes of Europe upon them, and brought a prestige to the name of Savoy which it never completely lost. This Count was the first of his race to hold the post of Vicar Imperial in Italy, assigned by the Emperors of Germany and fraught with immense importance. The balance of power, as it then existed in the civilised world, was entirely divided between the Pope of Rome and the Emperor of Germany, the one, the representative of spiritual, and the other, of temporal, supremacy in Europe. The office of Imperial Vicar conferred by the reigning Cæsar was a position which placed the holder above many of his superiors in rank,

and gave him a dignity but little below that of the Emperor himself. This dignity was conferred several times on the princes of Savoy, and on all occasions they knew how to turn it to their own account as well as to the advantage of their imperial patron.

A great peril threatened the rising kingdom on the death of Thomas I., when his sons (eight, ten, or fifteen in number, according to different writers) fell out over their father's will. These dissensions rent the House of Savoy with disturbances of a nature till then unknown in its annals. The right of succession in the Savoyard dynasty was restricted absolutely to the male line; but the law of primogeniture was by no means equally determined, and though, from the time of Humbert I. down to Thomas I., each father usually had been followed by his eldest son, this state of things was now to change. The good of the State was a matter to be more carefully considered than the feelings of individuals; so a unanimous decree of the people declared that, while remaining loyal to their

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present dynasty, that member of the dynasty best fitted to enhance the renown of his house and the welfare of his people should be selected as their ruler, irrespective of his position in the family. This selection of the fittest proved a very apple of discord among the sons of Thomas I., and not till most of them had been gathered to rest did the turbulence subside.

The eldest son of Thomas I., Amadeus IV., who had been chosen by his father to succeed him, was of a weak temperament. In order to pacify his brothers he gave up much of the territory which fell to his share, and reserved for himself only the valleys of Susa and Aosta.¹ This division of the family rights and territories was further complicated when Amadeus V., son of Thomas II. and grandson of Thomas I., was chosen as Count, to the exclusion of his eldest brother's son, Philip, afterwards Prince of Achaia and founder of that branch of the House of Savoy. On Philip

¹ Amadeus's second wife was Cecilia del Balzo, whose beauty was so extraordinary that she was given the surname of "Passe Rose," as surpassing even the Queen of Flowers in loveliness.

the succession should have devolved by right, but as he was only eight years old, his claims were set aside, and his uncle Amadeus succeeded in establishing himself on the throne, which is occupied to this day by his descendants to the exclusion of the elder branch.

The Barony of Vaud, founded by Louis, or Lodovico, third son of Thomas II., caused another division in the House of Savoy, which helped still further to scatter their possessions and interests, besides weakening the resources and power of the separate branches. On the accession of Amadeus V., in 1285, Savoy presented a very disjointed appearance. Three princes ruled over what constituted but one State, Amadeus being Count of Savoy, while his brother Lodovico was Lord of Vaud, and his nephew Philip, Prince of Achaia, a title which he took from his wife Isabella of Villehardouin, heiress of the principalities of Achaia and the Morea. The rest of the country was split up among the families of Montferrat, Saluces, the Visconti, and the Commune of Asti.

Amadeus V. was pre-eminently a warrior and his whole life was devoted to fighting, but he was, nevertheless, fully alive to the danger of dismemberment. He strove hard to remedy the evil. He confirmed the Salic law with even more rigorous measures than of old, and excluded all possibility of female succession to the throne of Savoy. By war, purchase, or treaty he regained many lost possessions and fealties. He bought the town of Chambéry from Ugo de la Rochette, and there built the castle which he made the seat of government for his Transalpine dominions. He also united his arms to those of the Prince of Achaia, when he succeeded in driving the Angevins out of Piedmont and in opposing a firm front to the Emperor, the Visconti, and the Communes.

Amadeus, moreover, was a man who was welcomed at the courts of his more powerful neighbours; for in 1307, at the request of Philip the Fair, of France, he attended the marriage of that monarch's daughter Isabella ("the she-wolf of France") with Edward II. of England, which took

place at Boulogne-sur-Mer. Amadeus and his son Edward (so called after his godfather Edward I.) were present at the coronation of Edward of Carnarvon, "ce qui se fit en grande solemnite au palais de Westminster, l'an mille trois cent neuf." This was a ceremony evidently well patronised by the "Casa Savoia," as Louis, Baron of Vaud, also took part in it.

The reigns of the two sons of Amadeus V., Edward the Liberal and Aimon the Peaceable, were spent chiefly in warring against Dauphins of Vienne. The two brothers were complete contrasts as to character; Edward spent every penny he possessed and exhausted also the revenues of the State; Aimon, on the other hand, devoted himself to replenishing the exchequer and repairing in every way he could the damage wrought by his brother's extravagance. Count Aimon was, according to Costa de Beauregard, "one of the wisest and best princes of his race." His rule proved unceasingly advantageous to the country; his wisdom was so widely recognised that he was

called upon to arbitrate between England and France, and to determine, before matters became too complicated, the question as to the homage claimed by France from England for the possession of the province of Guienne. Peace, however, was impossible between the two countries, each of which applied to Aimon to espouse its cause. The Count judged it expedient to side with France. He died before the conclusion of the war, leaving his eldest son, Amadeus VI., a minor, hardly nine years old.

The forethought of Aimon provided for his son's education as well as for the regency during his minority. This period proved in every way beneficial to the State. The country enjoyed peace; the financial condition of affairs improved; and all conduced to such prosperity as made the reign of Amadeus VI. an age of splendour for Savoy. This Count is celebrated also for the brilliancy of his Court, and for the tournaments and chivalrous deeds which took place under his auspices. "Armour'd all in forest green," as Sir



MONUMENT OF AIMON THE PEACEFUL, COUNT OF SAVOY, AND OF HIS WIFE,
YOLANDE OF MONTFERRAT, AT HAUTECOMBE.

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Tristram of the Woods, he gained for himself the character of a perfect knight and the surname of the "Conte Verde" by which he is generally known in history. Amadeus VI. is recorded as one of Savoy's greatest princes. The part he took in the Crusades and in other movements occupying public attention brought Savoy into prominence as a power not to be ignored.

Three princes of the name of Amadeus reigned in succession: Amadeus VI., the Conte Verde; Amadeus VII., the Conte Rosso; and Amadeus VIII., the Peaceful. During their reigns the House of Savoy was unified; the two offshoots of the family, the Barons of Vaud and the Princes of Achaia, became extinct successively in 1350 and in 1418. Under Amadeus VIII., who was made Duke in 1416, the foundations were firmly laid for the future monarchy of the House of Savoy. The names of both the Conte Verde and the Conte Rosso are so associated with tournaments, jousts, and feats of arms, that their influence as rulers and

statesmen is sometimes overlooked ; but Amadeus VI., especially, plays an even more important part in history than in romance and chivalry. He was constantly appealed to as an arbitrator in his neighbours' quarrels, settling in turn the differences between the town of Milan and the House of Montferrat (1379), between the Scaligeri and the Visconti, and between Venice and Genoa (1381). In the last instance he put a stop to the war of Chioggia, which was wasting the life-blood of the two republics. Amadeus, unfortunately, was incited to espouse the cause of Louis of Anjou, and hastened to Naples to the support of his ally. Here he was struck down by the plague, and died March 1, 1383, aged only forty-one years. The chief event in the reign of his son, Amadeus VII., the Conte Rosso, (apart from the jousts and tourneys for which Savoy was then famous) was the acquisition of the province of Nice, in 1388.

The manner in which this seaboard was obtained obliges us to turn for a moment to the position of the House of Anjou in

Italy, and its effect—at once important and pernicious—on Savoyard history. In 1262, Pope Urban IV., out of hatred for the House of Swabia, set a movement on foot to provide a champion for the Church and against the Emperor. This led to the settlement of the House of Anjou in Italy. Charles of Anjou, brother of St. Louis, on accepting the Pope's invitation to act as champion, hastened into Italy to possess himself of Naples and of as much other territory as he could possibly obtain, either through war or negotiation. The counties of Provence and Nice were already his through his wife.¹ He also owned some fiefs in Piedmont. It was no fault of his, if he did not succeed in expelling the princes of Savoy from the heritage of their forefathers. Though Charles failed in this, and suffered many defeats in other parts of the peninsula, he succeeded in establishing the Angevin dynasty in Italy. Its laws, its customs, and its rule persisted for a whole century and a

¹ She was Beatrice, fourth daughter of Raymond Berenger, the last Count of Provence.

half. Toward the close of this period, however, Amadeus VI. obtained from Louis of Anjou¹ all that the Counts of Provence and the Princes of Anjou held in vassalage in Piedmont. Out of gratitude for this concession, the Conte Verde engaged in the disastrous campaign which resulted in his death. This grant was further confirmed to Amadeus VII. The inhabitants of the region made voluntary submission to Savoy; the Durazzo family waived their claims, and Louis of Anjou surrendered all his rights to the Conte Rosso and thus discharged a debt of 164,000 florins of gold owed by him to Amadeus VI.

The death of Amadeus VII., in 1391, at the early age of thirty-one, left his country to mourn a prince under whose rule the young kingdom was steadily developing. Under the reign of his son, Amadeus VIII., who succeeded him, this development assumed even larger proportions. This Amadeus being eight years old at the time of his father's death, the regency was entrusted

¹ Louis was son of John, King of France, and brother of Charles V.

to his grandmother, Bonne of Bourbon, though his mother, Bonne of Berry, strove hard to possess herself of the government.

The reign of Amadeus VIII., surnamed the Peaceful, was one of the most prosperous in the annals of Savoy. The territory over which he ruled exceeded in extent that of any of his predecessors. The riches accumulated in the land, and the standing army which Amadeus was able to maintain insured for the country a season of peace beneficial to all classes of citizens. In 1416, the Emperor Sigismund raised the County of Savoy to the rank of a dukedom. Duke Amadeus had to pay two thousand golden crowns for this honour. He also received from Sigismund a patent which forbade any of his subjects from appealing to imperial jurisdiction, after sentence had been passed upon them by the Duke or by the Savoyard tribunals.

In 1434, in the midst of this reign of unprecedented success, a strange surprise awaited the subjects of Duke Amadeus, called by contemporaries "the modern

Solomon," from the wisdom of his words and doings. Was there possibly a morbid taint like that of the wise King of Israel infecting the veins of the Savoy Duke, and prompting him to cry "*Vanitas vanitatum*," and to leave the cares of his throne for the seclusion of Ripaille? The mixture of piety, worldly wisdom, simplicity, and ambition which go to form the character of Amadeus VIII., makes him an attractive and perplexing study to modern writers. No two authorities seem agreed as to the real impulses which made him successively a duke, a hermit, and a pope.

But Amadeus's renunciation of his throne at this time did not amount to a complete surrender of his authority. His purpose was not to abdicate, but to seek a haven of peace where, without the burden of office, he could direct the more important affairs of state. His eldest son, Louis, whom he named Prince of Piedmont, a title henceforward borne by the heir apparent of the House of Savoy, was to act in his stead. All serious matters of government, however, were to be referred by

the young man to his father. Amadeus took six chosen companions with him to his retreat at Ripaille, a beautiful site on the Lake of Geneva, and there founded the Order of St. Maurizio, which took its name from the newly created Hermit-Knights of St. Maurice. From Ripaille, Amadeus directed not only the affairs of his own realm, but he also acted as the mediator in many European questions. The treaty of Arras, which in 1435 put an end to the long war between England and France, is ascribed chiefly to his good and wise arbitration.

From his hermitage of combined peace and occupation, Amadeus VIII. was elected to the dignity of Pope, on November 15, 1439, by the Council of Basle, in opposition to Eugenius IV., who was declared by this same Council to be contumacious, and was deposed from office. It would require, at least, the College of Cardinals filled with men of the greatest learning, honesty, and wit, to explain the nomination of Duke Amadeus of Savoy to the Chair of St. Peter! It is said that his

piety, his love of peace, his frequent offices as a mediator, had won for him such universal esteem that he alone was judged worthy of such a post, or capable of healing the schisms then rending the Church. We must conclude that it was so. Still, against these arguments must be set the stern facts that Amadeus had not fully abdicated his own throne; though a widower, and, therefore, free to adopt celibacy, he had several children living, the fruit of his marriage with Mary of Burgundy; above all he was not, nor had he ever been, a priest. Notwithstanding, Amadeus accepted the tiara, drawing down on himself, both then and in later times, a charge of unscrupulous ambition from which it is not easy to exonerate him.

On assuming his pontifical duties, Amadeus abdicated in full his dukedom, appointing his eldest surviving son, Louis, in his place. For nine years Amadeus VIII., under the name of Felix V., was recognised by part of Christendom as the lawful and only Pope; another part looked upon Eugenius IV. as the legitimate suc-

cessor of St. Peter. There were some, however, who regarded with indifference this schism in the Church. Felix V. never reigned in the Eternal City. On the death of Eugenius, in 1447, the Conclave at Rome elected Thomas di Sarzana (Nicholas V.) to succeed him. Within the next two years, Felix wisely renounced the papal office, and retired once again to his hermitage at Ripaille. He died at Geneva, January 7, 1451, having been for twenty-five years Count of Savoy, for twenty-three years Duke, for nine years Pope, and for eighteen months Head Cardinal and Legate of the Holy See.

A change was now about to begin in the career of the House of Savoy. Instead of the path of progress and development up which the three Amadeuses had marched so steadily, a course of retrogression and abasement followed for a century and a half, down to the times of Philibert II., surnamed the Fair, and Charles III., miscalled the Good; for, as a modern writer declares, no reason is to be found for his surname, unless it were that he was

good for nothing.¹ This period of decay was inaugurated under Louis, the son of Amadeus VIII., a man of an indolent temperament, wholly given up to amusements and pageants. His wife, Anna of Cyprus, celebrated for her beauty, for the luxury of her tastes and habits, for her ambition and her intrigues, was in no way fitted to make good the shortcomings of her husband.

One of the principal charges brought against Louis, or, rather, against those who ruled in his name, is that he neglected an opportunity to add the Duchy of Milan to Savoy. This occurred in 1447, when Filippo Maria, the last of the Visconti, died without leaving a legitimate heir. The dukedom had been conferred on the Visconti in male succession only, the exclusion of any female or any descendant through the female line being strict and emphatic. Several pretenders, most of them, too, through the female line, rapidly presented themselves, the chief among them being the Duke of Savoy, the Duke

¹ Masi, *La Monarchia di Savoia*.

of Orleans, and Francesco Sforza.¹ It is needless to enlarge here on the way in which Francesco Sforza obtained the duchy, or on Louis's neglect of this and another opportunity for asserting his claims. Savoy lost at that time a chance of consolidating her possessions in the peninsula. Most of her historians maintain that this change could then have been brought about, thus anticipating by several centuries the formation of the Kingdom of United Italy. Louis's policy with regard to France was also hurtful to his country. In order to satisfy the ambition of his wife, he gave his daughter Charlotte in marriage to the Dauphin Louis, afterwards Louis XI., thus making a bitter foe of King Charles VII. At the same time, Savoy encouraged the Dauphin in his rebellion against his father.

Another action fraught with damage to Savoy was the expedition against Cyprus, undertaken to please Duchess Anna. The enterprise failed. The only advantage

¹ The other claimants were: Alfonso, King of Sicily; the Emperor of Germany; and the Venetians.

Savoy could set against a heavy loss of men, money, and prestige, was the hollow title of King of Cyprus, Jerusalem, and Armenia.

Dissensions and divisions in his own family embittered the last years of Louis's reign. He died, worn out and heart-broken, January 29, 1465, in France, whither he had gone to implore the aid of his son-in-law, Louis XI., against his own son Philip, Count de Bresse. He was succeeded by his son, Amadeus IX., who resembled his father in that he was entirely guided by his wife, and was as weak and helpless in her hands as Duke Louis had been in those of Anna. But there the resemblance ceases. Yolande of France, Amadeus's wife, was in every respect different from her mother-in-law, and her guidance, if properly supported, would have redounded only to the benefit of Savoy. She strove as far as lay in her power to remedy the evils wrought to the State by her husband's parents. She endeavoured by her energy and sagacity to make good the vacillating policy of her

husband ; for the luckless Duke, torn in two by the intrigues of France and Burgundy, was totally unable to oppose either, or to maintain the position gained for Savoy by his grandfather, Amadeus VIII.

The feuds that embroiled the House of Savoy in the reign of Amadeus IX. were all too favourable for the designs and treacherous intentions of Louis XI. of France. The French King's sister, Yolande, strove to support the rights of her husband's country against the encroachments of her brother, but the latter found ample opportunity to further his own advantages, regardless of the character he assumed as the protector of his sister and her husband and children. These encroachments of Louis XI. were viewed with a jealous eye by Amadeus's brother, Philip de Bresse, who still further weakened the condition of his country by espousing the cause of Yolande's enemies, and by joining the "League of the Public Good," wherein were united Louis's most bitter opponents. On the other hand, the open adherence given to France by Duke Amadeus and his coun-

sellors was hurtful to Savoy, and for many years subjected the country to a series of disasters. The animosity shown by Count Philip to his brother and sister-in-law was continued after the death of Amadeus IX. (1472). Together with his brothers, the Count de Romont, and the Bishop of Geneva, he thwarted every action of Yolande. During the minority of her son, Philibert I., when she was appointed guardian and regent, the hostility of her brothers-in-law to Yolande was never relaxed for a single moment.

Yolande died in 1478. Her son Philibert survived her only a few years, dying at seventeen years of age, in 1482, when his brother, Charles I., succeeded him. As Charles was but fourteen years old, his uncle, Louis XI. of France, possessed himself of the government, and of the tutorship of the young Duke. On Louis's death in the following year (1483), his nephew shook off all control, and, after a triumphant entry into Turin, took the reins of office into his own hands. Charles gave promise of extraordinary powers of

mind, and hopes began to revive that the country would again resume a position of greatness and independence. These hopes were cruelly blighted by his death, under strong suspicion of poison, in 1490. His only son, Charles II., was but nine months old at this date, so his mother, Blanche of Montferrat, was named guardian of the boy, and regent of the State. Her regency was marked by the arrival in Italy of Charles VIII., of France, to whom Blanche opened the passes of the Alps to facilitate his journey. She also gave him presents of money and jewels, fear inspiring her with generosity and courtesy towards the French monarch. She used every means in her power to speed him on his way and to free Savoy from so undesirable a guest. This expedition of Charles VIII. into Italy brought only woe to all concerned. To the Savoyards it was most baneful, in increasing the dislike between the two nations and in emphasising an antipathy injurious to both.

The wise rule of Blanche of Montferrat came to an end in 1496, when the little Duke

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—not yet seven years old—died ; his great-uncle Philip, the fifth son of Louis and of Anna of Cyprus, became Duke in his fifty-eighth year. The ambitious restlessness of the early years of Philip's life gave rise to fears as to the policy he would pursue when the coveted reins of office were in his hands. The revolts he had headed against his parents and against the regents, Yolande of France and Blanche of Montferrat, the treaties he had formed with his country's foes, the inherent turbulence of his nature,—all pointed to an agitated reign. But the vicissitudes of fortune, the rebuffs he had experienced, his imprisonment in France, and the sobering hand of Time, had quelled his spirit and modified his ambitions. The restlessness of former days was exchanged for an earnest desire for his country's good ; the wisdom and firmness of his rule caused universal satisfaction, while the fact that the direction of affairs was once again in the hands of an able man inspired general confidence. Philip, after battling and intriguing for the possession of power for forty years,

enjoyed it only eighteen months. He died in 1497, leaving the succession to his son, Philibert II., surnamed the Fair.

A new policy was inaugurated under Philibert II., in which he was followed by nearly all the princes of Savoy. His predecessors had been blindly subservient to France. This attitude was henceforth abandoned. Savoy sought, instead, a closer union with Austria, which began from this date to be considered as an ally rather than as an enemy. The early part of the Duke's reign saw him, however, a keen partisan of France and a warm adherent of that country ; but on the occasion of his second marriage, with Margaret of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian, a change took place in his sentiments and politics. The intense hatred felt toward France by the Emperor and his daughter became the chief reason for loosening the ties that bound Philibert to that side. Against this influence was set that of René of Savoy, the Duke's natural brother and, till then, his most trusted counsellor. René's sympathies were

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wholly French. Even his influence waned before that of Margaret, and having sustained his opinions too vehemently in opposition to hers, he fell from his high post and withdrew from Court, vowing vengeance upon those who had compassed his overthrow.

Between the extreme views held by Margaret on the one side, and by René on the other, Philibert saw fit to adopt a middle course. By concessions to the great Powers around him, he steered with such diplomacy through the quicksands threatening to engulf him that he obtained the support he needed. At the same time he was able to reserve to himself the choice of entering into alliances with France or Austria, as circumstances suited or advantages prompted. This policy, which now became traditional in the diplomatic dealings of Savoy, is one that requires at all times the sanction of success to make it admissible ; otherwise, the reproach of treachery will be attached to it and condemn it. In the hands of a prince like Philibert II., for example, endowed with tact and nerve,



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it gave promise of abiding gain to the country. In the case of his brother and immediate successor, Charles III., it entailed ruin and almost annihilation upon the land. But Charles followed blindly along the lines started by Philibert, as indeed did most of his successors, thus calling down upon the rulers of Savoy a charge of double-dealing in action and of subservience to whatever power was in the ascendant, regardless of loyalty and straightforwardness, and indifferent to all but their own advantage. Doubtless, such a charge is not altogether unfounded.

Still, it must be borne in mind that Savoy was essentially a "weaker vessel." Her geographical position placed her at the mercy of countries which could crush her should they choose to do so, though her command of the Alps and of the passes into Italy gave her an importance that had to be respected. To-day, when we see Italy united as a great and ever-increasing kingdom, we cannot altogether blame a diplomacy which for so many centuries steadily advanced, building up

the nation with the aid, sometimes even at the expense, of one or another of its neighbours, calmly setting before its eyes the goal of an independent kingdom, and making toward it with all the determination and energy of one who knows the value of the prize to be won.

But no policy worthy of the name was followed by Philibert's successor and half-brother, Charles III., surnamed the Good. His ruling maxim was peace at any price, but he was totally unable to adhere to his principles. Out of his reign of forty-nine years, forty-one were spent in warfare; he, nevertheless, strove after peace in a way that resulted only in sacrificing his country without fulfilling his aim. The consequence was that he met with universal contempt. France, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, in turn, treated Savoy with disdain or indifference. Many of her most treasured possessions were taken from her. Charles, who had surrendered himself body and soul into the hands of his nephew, Francis I. of France, met with the treatment which that most treacherous of kings

never failed to mete out to those who put their trust in him.

The disastrous reign of Charles III. came to a close in 1553, when he was followed by his son, Emmanuel Philibert, a prince whose talents, both as a statesman and a warrior, served to raise Savoy to the eminence which she had attained under the Conte Verde and Amadeus VIII., and where she remained for several years. Educated at the Court of Charles V. and Philip II. of Spain, Emmanuel Philibert was imbued with Spanish sympathies and habits which clung to him during his lifetime. He introduced into his Court much of the etiquette and ceremonial peculiar to Spain. To some extent, this is in vogue at the Court of Italy to this day. Charles V., whose insight into character was proverbial, had always expressed a high opinion of the young Prince of Piedmont ; when he reached the age of twenty-five, Charles appointed him to the supreme command of the imperial forces in Flanders. This honour was bestowed to knit Emmanuel Philibert to the Spanish

cause and to detach him from France. The French King was anxious to enlist the services of the Prince, and had already held out bribes to him with that intent. Emmanuel Philibert, however, showed himself worthy of the trust placed in him by the Emperor, and by his conduct silenced the murmurs that had arisen on account of his nomination. Hardly had he gained his first victory at Hesdin (1553), when the news of his father's death reached him. The impulse to return to Savoy in order to establish his rule and restore his duchy to its former position had, however, to give way to reasons that made such an impulse seem rash and impolitic. For three years the Duke remained attached to the Court of Spain, awaiting the moment when the interests of his Spanish cousin ¹ might be replaced by his own.

The important battle of St. Quentin (1557) raised Emmanuel Philibert's reputation as a general to the highest degree.

¹ Emmanuel Philibert was nephew to Charles V., his mother, Beatrice of Portugal, being sister to Charles's wife, Isabella of Portugal. He was, consequently, first cousin to Philip II.

Had he been allowed to carry out his scheme and march instantly upon Paris, it is probable that the entire history of Europe would have assumed a different aspect. This profitable and strategic move was lost through the cowardice and jealousy of Philip. The immense advantages that might have been gained by the victory of St. Quentin were stupidly thrown away. In the following year (1558) the victory of Gravelines enforced upon the French King, Henry II., the necessity of peace. The treaty of Chateau-Cambresis, signed the next year (1559), restored to the Duke of Savoy a large part of his lost possessions. This treaty was confirmed by the marriages of Emmanuel Philibert with Margaret of Valois, sister of Henry II., and of Philip II. of Spain with Isabella, the French King's daughter.

The reign of Emmanuel Philibert may be taken as that wherein the actual monarchy of Savoy was established, and the Duke himself may be considered as the founder of that monarchy. On the death of his father, Charles III., and at the

moment of his accession, his realm was in a state of devastation, and his subjects were divided into French and Austrian factions. The fortresses throughout the land were thrown down; the passes into the country were open on all sides; the people were without affection or respect for the dynasty which had once held such sway over their hearts and minds. Emmanuel Philibert had not only to win the love of his people, but to arouse in them instincts of patriotism and civilisation, and to create anew a country in which such sentiments could be rightfully called into play. He never once faltered. He rebuilt one by one the strongholds throughout the land; he laid the seat of his government at Turin, where he erected the citadel,¹ and he turned the town from a republican centre into a court-loving capital. To him also belongs the merit of organising the first efforts at a navy, as well as of establishing a standing army, two facts which raised the status of Savoy in the eyes of the other European

¹ The architect was Paciotto da Urbino.

nations. Though the Duke was ever a staunch Roman Catholic, his mildness toward the Waldenses and his refusal to countenance their persecution prove him to have been a tolerant and large-minded prince. His mission was a grand one. The country, sunk in slavery, degradation, and misery, was restored by him to liberty, prosperity, and greatness. His dynasty, re-established in the hearts of his people and on the throne of his ancestors, was secured for centuries to his descendants. Though the last years of the "Iron-Headed Duke"¹ were passed in profound melancholy, gleams of brightness must have flashed across the gloom. So splendid a life was not lived in vain.

The work of Emmanuel Philibert was to find expansion at the hands of his son and successor, Charles Emmanuel I., who, though not so great as his father in many respects, yet gained from his contemporaries the surname of "Il Grande." He kindled in the hearts of his subjects a love and an admiration unequalled by any

¹ His surname was "Testa di Ferro" (Head of Iron).

prince of the House of Savoy. Charles Emmanuel united in his person those eccentricities and weaknesses which often characterise men of genius. Possessing gifts for statecraft and military organisation, we find him also playing the role of a philosopher and a poet, but relying upon superstitions, incantations, and horoscopes to an extent not consistent with his other enlightened ideas. He lacked the patience needed to make good the dreams of his boundless ambition, and from this defect he lost much that his father had won by years of endurance and self-control.

Charles Emmanuel, instead of devoting all his ideas to the one object of advancing upon Italy, aimed at the conquests of Geneva, Montferrat, and Saluces, besides aspiring to the crowns of Bohemia, Portugal, Spain, France, and Germany. His efforts to acquire Geneva and Montferrat failed absolutely ; but after nine years of warfare with France, Saluces, "that French thorn remaining in the side of the Piedmontese monarchy,"¹ was conquered

¹ Balbo, *Sommario della Storia d'Italia*, p. 322, Firenze, 1856.

by Savoy. The treaty that closed this war was signed at Lyons (1601), when Saluces was assured to the Duke by Henry IV. who received in exchange the provinces of Bresse, Bugey, and Valromey. This was an exchange whereby Savoy lost in extent of territory and in the number of her subjects, but gained as to the geographical grouping of her estates, besides ridding herself of an enemy settled in the very heart of her dominions.

It has been said (the saying is ascribed to Lesdiguières, who commanded the French army in this campaign, while that of Savoy was under the command of Duke Charles) that in this treaty Henry IV. acted like a merchant and Charles Emmanuel like a prince and a politician; but this is not true. The advantage to each side was about equal, and though Charles expressed abiding displeasure at the terms he had accepted, he had the satisfaction of knowing that the exchange of provinces served to consolidate his realm. Another beneficial effect was that of developing the power of Savoy on the Italian

side, and of loosening her grasp upon France, where the maintenance of each inch of territory cost her an effort and struggle that she was little able to bear. It also deprived France of the key to a passage into Italy that, until then, had enabled French troops to enter unsuspected and unmolested into the very heart of the duchy. What also proved of untold advantage to Savoy in the cession of Saluces was that, as soon as the French had recovered the loss of their foothold in Italy, they immediately saw the need of supporting the Dukes of Savoy against Spanish encroachments, and, in order to preserve the balance of power, France strove in every way to increase the strength and prestige of Savoy so as to enable her to hold her own against Spain and Austria.

The part played by Charles Emmanuel against Spain is a fresh proof of his energy and boldness. A quarrel with that country arose from the Duke's desire to possess himself of the heritage of Montferrat which, through the death of the last Marquis, Guglielmo Gonzaga, and his

immediate descendants, had become a prey to the neighbouring Powers. The Duke endeavoured to add Montferrat to his domains by the marriage of his son with Maria, the only surviving member of the House of Gonzaga. Spain resented such a union and for four years waged war upon Savoy. The way in which Charles Emmanuel contended against the vast power and resources of the Spanish Empire filled Europe with admiration and respect. Though he gained no substantial advantage from the struggle, history records how "a Duke of Savoy, alone and unaided, resisted the King of Spain."

The restless activity of Charles Emmanuel led him into wars and alliances that pressed heavily upon his country, without bringing to it any compensating gain. His reckless temerity involved him a second time in a struggle with the two Houses of Spain and Austria; had it not been for the Venetians, who stood by him loyally and bravely, he would have paid dear for a foolhardiness that would not be

restrained, and that all but cost him his crown. His alliances, however, were always formed with an eye to his own ends, and the manner in which he profited by one ally to betray another when it suited him, has cast a lasting reproach upon a character that, otherwise, had many attractive traits. Leagued, in turn, with France and Spain, he betrayed both. His treachery in a plot against Geneva, headed by one Vacher, in 1628, can never be condoned. But in spite of these failings, Charles Emmanuel was adored by his people; his soldiers followed him without pay, almost without food or clothing; even the writers who blame him most admit that it is "impossible not to do as did his subjects, and to love him notwithstanding his defects." He died July 26, 1630, leaving his country torn and desolate. The province of Savoy was lost for the moment; Piedmont was in the hands of enemies; Susa and Pine-rollo, "the two keys of Italy," were in the power of France; Casale was on the verge of destruction; and French, Spaniards,

and Imperialists were the arbiters of Italy.

The policy of Savoy with regard to France and Spain obliged her to stand ever on the defensive. Notwithstanding her shifts to keep on a friendly footing with the Power offering her the greater advantage, she was constantly at war, according as the sympathies of her rulers were with the French or the Spanish. The hatred evinced by Spain for Charles Emmanuel I. drove his son and successor, Victor Amadeus I. (1630), to seek the alliance of France, an alliance urged as well by his wife Christina, daughter of Henry IV. and sister of Louis XIII. This alliance was strengthened on the death, in 1637, of Victor Amadeus, who left Christina, better known in history as "Madama Reale," regent of the country. In the seven years of his reign Victor Amadeus had endeared himself to his people, and had given proofs of his ability and valour as a general. His loss was the more to be deplored, as family dissensions threatened to embroil the state

and to facilitate the designs entertained by Cardinal Richelieu against the Duchy of Savoy.

Richelieu's hatred of Savoy and his boundless influence in France, made him a man to be dreaded and propitiated ; and Madama Reale's conduct, however faulty in other respects, is above all praise in that she resisted the Cardinal, and forsook the traditions of a princess of France to provide for the safety and welfare of her adopted country. But otherwise, her regency was disastrous to Savoy : her beauty, her immorality, her intrigues, and her imperious will brought evil upon the land where she ruled despotically for eleven years, and where she held out stoutly for her own rights regardless of those of her brothers-in-law, and regardless, too, of the civil war into which this family feud plunged the land and its inhabitants. Madama Reale turned to France as her natural ally, while her brothers-in-law, Thomas and Maurice, invoked and obtained the help of Spain.

The Duchy of Savoy, torn between

these formidable factions, reached the very depths of misery and despair ; but the ship of state, which had weathered many a storm, again sailed safely through the shoals of treachery and civil war. The rescue from so alarming a danger, it must be conceded, was due in a great measure to Madama Reale. With indomitable courage, in the midst of defeats, losses, and treason, she sustained the energy of her party, and at last brought to an end the feud with her brothers-in-law and promoted the reunion of the House of Savoy against one common enemy.

This domestic peace was, however, ratified by as disgraceful a marriage as ever disfigured the annals of a family, that of Prince Maurice of Savoy, brother to the late Duke, and a lay cardinal, to his niece, Louisa Christina, daughter of Madama Reale and of Victor Amadeus I. The bride, aged only fourteen, was forced to accept the hand of her uncle, the Cardinal, and the tears the poor child shed on the occasion may well count as a costly tribute to peace. The war had lasted

from 1638 to 1642, and during those years Spain had supported the princes of Savoy, merely for the furtherance of Spanish ends, while Richelieu, under the excuse of protecting the sister of his sovereign, had in reality but sought her overthrow and that of her children.

The regency of Madama Reale extended over two reigns: the first, that of her eldest son, Francis Hyacinth, lasting only a year, as the lad died in 1638, aged seven; the second, that of her younger son, Charles Emmanuel II., who, on his brother's death, succeeded as fourteenth Duke of Savoy. Charles Emmanuel was then but four years old, and until his majority, at fourteen, his mother ruled absolutely. When he was declared of age, she still directed most of the affairs of state and exercised much control over the government till her death in 1663. During most of those years, war was waged between France and Spain, varied only by the cruel religious war against the Waldenses. In 1655, this persecution was brought to a close by the peace of Pine-

rolo, chiefly ascribed to Cardinal Mazarin. He had succeeded to Richelieu's influence and position in France, and was by no means minded to see Savoy exhaust against the Waldenses a strength and treasury which he considered better employed in preserving the balance of power between France and Spain. Even more important for the House of Savoy was the Treaty of the Pyrenees, signed a few years later (1669), ending the war which for eighty years had desolated Savoy, Piedmont, and Italy, and restoring to Savoy most of the towns till then wrongly possessed by France.

The death of Charles Emmanuel II. has been described as unrivalled in the annals of monarchical history for solemnity and impressiveness. Feeling his end approaching, the Duke ordered the doors of his palace to be opened, so that his subjects, whom he loved, and who in their turn loved him and had flocked to the palace gates, should see him pass away. His death occurred in 1675, after he had enjoyed a period of profound peace, which enabled

him to "live in quiet as well as in splendour, a builder of churches, palaces, and villas, a good and accomplished prince, and a patron of letters."¹ He was succeeded by his son, Victor Amadeus II., a boy of nine. The widowed Duchess, Jeanne Baptiste de Nemours, was appointed regent. Like her predecessor, Madama Reale, she had to oppose, by all the powers of statecraft that she could bring to her aid, the insidious attacks of France, this time a deadlier foe even than of yore, as Louis XIII. was now replaced by Louis XIV., and "Le Grand Monarque" was yet more to be feared than the wily and perfidious Richelieu.

The regent, Jeanne, in common with her mother-in-law, Madama Reale, was ambitious, and in no way desirous of resigning the reins of office when once she had them within her grasp. She kept her son in ignorance of all state questions; on his reaching the age of fourteen—an age when the princes of Savoy attained their majority—she craftily turned his attention to pleasures and pastime

¹ Balbo, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

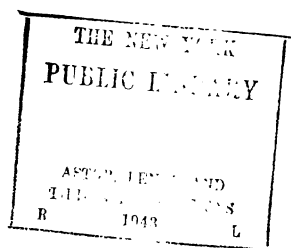


him to "live in quiet as well as in peace," and to be "a builder of churches, palaces, and other good and accomplished pieces of work, and a patron of letters."¹ He was succeeded by his son, Victor Amadeus II., a true monarch. The widowed Duchess, Jeanne Baptiste de Nemours, was appointed regent, and, to her predecessor, Maria Theresa, it was said to oppose, by all the powers of the State, that she could bring to bear, during the attacks of France, this tenacious and even than of yore. Louis XIII. was replaced by Louis XIV., and the "Sun King Monarque" was yet more to be feared than the wily and perturbed Richelieu.

The regent, Jeanne Baptiste, was her mother-in-law, Marie Louise d'Orléans, and in no way did she differ from Richelieu, and in no way did she differ from Louis XIV. in her policy of keeping the reins of government in her own hand, and within her grasp, and keeping her son in ignorance of all that was going on, until on his reaching the age of sixteen, an age when the young nobles began to claim their majority, and to draw the attention to please the king, and to the

¹ *ibid.*, p. 100.





with the intention of alienating him from any share he might wish to take in the government. But she had mistaken the nature with which she had to deal. Victor Amadeus II., roused to a sense, not only of his duties, but of his capacities, asserted his resolution to reign as Duke, and, greatly to his mother's surprise and annoyance, shook himself free of her control.

For a time Victor Amadeus had to submit to the autocratic desires of Louis XIV., but he laid plans to throw off the mask of subservience as soon as he felt himself strong enough. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Louis XIV. endeavoured to persuade the other sovereigns of Europe to follow in his steps, and to uphold the bigotry and cruelty of his action by imitating it themselves. He incited Victor Amadeus to join in the persecution against the Waldenses, and though the young Duke's mind revolted against so harsh and narrow-minded a measure, he was not yet sufficiently powerful to oppose Louis's wishes, and so he embarked in a war that certainly did not enlist his sympathies.

But he was gradually gathering strength to act as he chose, not as "Le Grand Monarque" dictated. In 1690, he joined the "Grand Alliance" against Louis, and opened the mountain passes to the wretched Waldenses to enable them to enter in safety into the defiles and strongholds of their native valleys.

This act of Victor Amadeus's brought down upon him the full force of Louis's anger. A French army was immediately despatched into Piedmont under the command of Marshal Catinat. The French laid waste the land, burned villages, murdered the population, and gained a great battle at Staffarda (1690). But the following year the Duke wiped out this defeat by a brilliant victory at Cuneo. He then invaded the Dauphiny, with the intention of pillaging and devastating the province; but he was seized with small-pox and had to abandon his project.

Another French victory at Marseilles (1693) was avenged two years later by the capture of Casale (1695). Louis, now wearied of Victor Amadeus's opposition,

disheartened at the failure of the Piedmontese campaign, and anxious to prepare for the War of the Spanish Succession, impending between his own country and Spain, desired to make peace. A treaty was accordingly concluded in 1696, and by it Victor Amadeus regained all his states, including the town of Pinerolo, a bone of contention between France and Savoy, which till then had been as often a French as a Savoyard possession. The Peace of Ryswick (1698) confirmed the advantages gained by Victor Amadeus for Savoy, and brought a general truce to Europe. But "the question of the Spanish Succession was drawing nearer every day,"¹ and around it the armies of Europe were soon to be plunged in a bloody warfare of fourteen years.

Victor Amadeus II. must also be ranked among the claimants to the throne of Spain. He based his claim through his descent from his great-grandmother, Catherine, wife of Charles Emmanuel I., and

¹ Green, J. R., *A Short History of the English People*, p. 700, London, 1889.

daughter of Philip II., but the superior rights of Philip of Anjou (grandson of Louis XIV.) and of Leopold of Austria engrossed public attention to the exclusion of smaller pretenders. Victor Amadeus, together with Spain and Bavaria, joined the cause of Louis and his grandson against Austria, which was supported shortly after by England and Holland.

The first operations began with a masterly advance by the Austrian forces across the Tyrol, organised by Prince Eugene of Savoy, the commander-in-chief of the imperial army. He was the cousin of Duke Victor Amadeus II., who, however, had espoused the opposite side. Eugene's evolutions on the Adige and the Mincio were so successful that the French general, Catinat, was recalled from his command and replaced by Marshal Villeroi. But Villeroi's capacities were limited. Against the advice of the Duke of Savoy and other generals, he allowed himself to be inveigled by Prince Eugene into a fight at Chieri (1702), where he was defeated. He, too, was recalled; the Duke

of Vendome was sent in his stead. No special exploits on either side enlivened the rest of the year; but in September of the following year (1703), Victor Amadeus, whose alliance with France had never been willing, transferred his services to the Imperialists, perhaps from a suspicion that that party was now on the winning side, a side on which Casa Savoia generally preferred to be found.

In October, Victor Amadeus declared war against France, and three months later he signed an alliance with Leopold, by which the Emperor pledged himself to increase the strength of the Piedmontese forces and to hand over to the Duke Montferrat, Alessandria, Valenza, the Lomellina, and the Val de Sesia. But the campaigns of 1703, 1704, and 1705 proved disastrous to Victor Amadeus; he lost the provinces of Savoy and Nice, and the town of Verrua; nevertheless, his military renown shone out, even among so many great generals, and raised still higher the position ever held by the House of Savoy for valour.

60 The House of Savoy

The famous siege of Turin occurred in 1706. A gallant defence was maintained for four months against the French under their general, La Feuillade. When all hope for the garrison seemed at an end, Prince Eugene came to his cousin's rescue, and their united efforts and skill saved the capital at Piedmont. It was then, while standing on the heights of Superga and devising means for delivering Turin, that Victor Amadeus vowed, if his arms proved successful, to build a temple as a resting place for the royal members of his line and as a token of gratitude to God for his victory.

The war dragged on without any special interest till 1713, when the Peace of Utrecht—ratified the year after by the Peace of Rastadt—put an end to the War of the Spanish Succession. The results of this war for Victor Amadeus were advantageous. He was reinstated in possession of all his territories; the pride of France crushed and broken, she no longer disputed with him the lordship of towns and mountain passes which belonged by

right to a Cisalpine kingdom; and the crown of Sicily was conferred on him. He thus became the first of his house to bear the title of King. On December 24, 1713, he and his wife, Anna Maria of Orleans, were crowned at Palermo. Here they remained for a year, endeavouring to introduce into their kingdom reforms and improvements which, however, their new subjects showed no inclination to accept.

Victor Amadeus's reign as King of Sicily was of short duration. Fresh wars in Europe undid many of the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht. Spanish forces established themselves in Sicily and disputed the right of Victor Amadeus to that kingdom, and they obtained the mastery over his troops. They obliged the newly made king to renounce his crown and to accept that of Sardinia instead. This exchange in no way compensated for the loss of the larger and more important realm of Sicily.

From that moment Victor Amadeus devoted himself to internal administration. The army occupied most of his attention, but he found leisure for matters

of finance, agriculture, and legislation. He effaced all trace of the feudal system, especially in Savoy and Piedmont where it had been most firmly rooted. Family sorrows, however, saddened the last years of his life. His daughter, Louise Gabrielle, wife of Philip V. of Spain, died in 1714; his eldest son, called also Victor Amadeus, to whom he was passionately devoted, died in 1715, leaving the next son, Charles Emmanuel, Duke of Aosta, heir to the throne, a prince for whom his father had no affection. The Queen died in 1728, and two years later, worn out with public cares and private griefs, the King resolved to abdicate. He also decided to marry again, and he chose as his wife the Countess of San Sebastiano, a widow in attendance on the Princess of Piedmont, and whom he raised to the rank of Marchesa di Spigno. Both resolutions were for a while kept secret; but on September 3, 1730, at a solemn meeting of the prelates and nobles of his kingdom, Victor Amadeus announced his intention of retiring to private life, and proclaimed his

marriage, which had been celebrated privately on the 12th of August. His son, Charles Emmanuel III., opposed to the utmost of his power his father's act of abdication. He implored him with tears to remain as King, or, at all events, to reconsider his decision; but the King was obdurate, and set off the next day with his wife for Chambery, where he intended to end his days.

For a year the two kings worked in harmony; Charles Emmanuel not only asked for, but followed, his father's advice. At the end of the year, however, things changed, and the tragedy of Victor Amadeus's life began. What brought about the change has never been altogether explained. It may have been the ambition of the Marchesa di Spigno. She little dreamt when she married the King, that the very next month she was to forego the position and power of a reigning monarch's wife and sink at once to the rank of a mere dowager. This may have prompted her to incite her husband to resume his office and dignity. It may be

that, after the excitement and activity of his reign, the quiet and monotony of a retired life held charms that existed only in imagination. Whatever the cause may have been, Victor Amadeus strove to regain the power he had relegated to his son. The refusals of the son to listen to his father's appeals and the treatment endured by the old King have caused him to be sometimes spoken of as the Piedmontese King Lear. History and romance depict the sufferings borne by the "very foolish, fond old man," who died in prison. His wife had been forcibly separated from him, but was allowed to nurse him in his illness. The reasons for the harshness shown by Charles Emmanuel III. to his father have never come to light. Charles caused the old King to be arrested and confined. His wife, forcibly removed from his side, was shut up in a fortress assigned to women of evil repute. After a time she was released, only to be immured in a convent at Pinerolo.

King Victor Amadeus II. died at Moncalieri, October 30, 1732, leaving the

kingdom in prosperity which was increased under Charles Emmanuel III. This monarch inaugurated a change in the home government, introducing a minister to divide with himself the administration of affairs, a measure which put a check on the almost absolute rule exercised till then by the King or Duke in Savoy. The ministers who left the greatest mark in his reign were the Marchese d'Ormea, the Conte Bogino, the Marchesi di San Tomaso, del Borgo, and di Broglio ; Osorio, and Solaro. The new form of government was but another proof of the decline of feudal ideas and customs throughout the land.

The reign of Charles Emmanuel III. is memorable chiefly for the two wars that occurred at that period, for the succession of Poland and for that of Austria. In both Charles, who was a born soldier and general, took part, though changing his side oftener, perhaps, than loyalty demanded, or his biographers care to explain. In the war to determine whether the Elector of Saxony or Stanislaus Lesz-

czynski was to sit on the throne of Poland, Charles sided with France against Austria, and for his brilliant victory at Guastalla (1734) he was awarded the Duchy of Milan. He was the first of his family to possess the long-coveted "Milanese," but the prize was not long in his hands; for, in 1736, the peace of Vienna led to a resettlement of the conquered lands in Italy, and Charles had to cede Milan, and to satisfy himself instead with Novara, Tortona, and the suzerainty of the Langes district. The bargain, however, was not a bad one, and a few years later was improved still further, when the treaty of Aquisgrana (1748) added other territories to those already in his possession.

The next war in which Charles Emmanuel III. took part, that of the Austrian Succession, was on larger proportions. No sooner had the Emperor Charles VI. breathed his last, than several princes laid claim to his crown, regardless of the fact that their signatures, affixed but shortly before to the Pragmatic Sanction, required them to recognise the daughter of Charles

VI., Maria Theresa, as his successor. Charles Emmanuel of Savoy, who, however, had always refused to subscribe to the Sanction, saw in the war consequent on this disputed succession an opportunity for avenging himself on France for the loss of Milan. He allied himself with Maria Theresa, though making a strange condition, which was that, if he at any time wished to cancel his engagement whether for state or for other reasons, he should be free to do so, provided only that he gave two months' notice of his intention. This constant readiness to shift sides was far from disadvantageous to the welfare and aggrandisement of his realm.

In most respects Charles Emmanuel III. was a great man, and as a soldier his character certainly is unassailable. He devoted himself to everything relating to military matters ; the details of training, exercising, and increasing his army engrossed him almost exclusively, while the quickness with which he could place a large force in the field, equipped and ready for action, shows him to have been in mil-

itary strategy much in advance of his age. His administrative powers were also above the average, but it is chiefly as a general that his name ranks high in Savoy history. In other matters he neither took, nor professed to take, much interest. Men of letters—unless their writings referred to military affairs—possessed no attraction for him, and such writers and poets as Denina, Badoni, Alfieri, Lagrange, Federici, and others, left Piedmont to seek appreciation and recognition in other lands.

The reign of Victor Amadeus III., Charles Emmanuel's son and successor, beginning in 1773, was a period of decadence in the history of Savoy. Victor Amadeus himself was a man little fitted to cope with the times in which he lived ; energy of purpose was altogether lacking in his nature. The dread storm of the French Revolution was fast gathering to a head.

Victor Amadeus's first act after his accession was to dismiss his father's ministers and advisers, and, in their stead, to choose men ignorant of state affairs and incapable

of providing against the perils then threatening the whole of Europe, which burst forth with such overwhelming violence before the close of his reign. The King of Sardinia, however, absorbed in questions of Court ceremonial and trivialities relating to fashion and etiquette, paid no heed to the signs of the times and refused to prepare against the on-coming storm. He drew incessantly upon the exchequer which he evidently considered as kept only to supply his tastes for hunting and display ; and he squandered on Court pageants and the chase the vast sums reserved by his father and ancestors for the exigencies of government. He was as much unable to contend with the spirit of the times and of the great Revolution, as to draw from it any of those advantages which might have been exercised for his country's good. His sympathies were strongly in favour of the French court ; and the asylum that he granted to several members of the royal family with which he was connected by marriage, together with provocations offered to the ambassa-

dor of the newly instituted French Republic, brought war upon him in 1792.¹

The country was ill prepared for hostilities. The treasury was exhausted, the army was demoralised by a long peace, while the men who might have been capable of acting with decision in such an emergency were either in exile or out of favour with the Court. Nothing, in fact, was wanting to make Savoy and Piedmont an easy prey to the invading army. One province after another was conquered by France. The population of Savoy, forgetful of their former allegiance and devotion to the dynasty of "Humbert of the White Hands," rejected even the name they bore, declaring that they were Allobrogi and no longer Savoyards. "The covenant," said they, "which bound the Allobrogian nation to the family of Victor Amadeus, is broken by act of forfeiture," and they sought to be constituted a French province. The Italian states, how-

¹ His eldest son, Charles Emmanuel IV., had married Marie Clothilde, daughter of Louis XV., and sister of the unfortunate Louis XVI.

ever, clung loyally to their sovereign, making strenuous efforts to raise funds and forces to oppose the French invaders. But in spite of splendid acts of gallantry and much self-denial on their part, the French for four successive years were victorious in almost every engagement. When Bonaparte, to crown their successes, came in person to superintend the military operations, Victor Amadeus gave up his cause as hopeless, and signed a disgraceful treaty at Cherasco (April 27, 1796), which was ratified a few days afterwards at Paris. He died six months later (October 16, 1796), leaving his country reduced to a state of misery, for which he must, to a great extent, be held responsible, though the treachery of Austria, on every possible occasion, must also bear a share of the blame.

Victor Amadeus III. was followed in turn by his three sons, Charles Emmanuel IV., Victor Emmanuel I., and Charles Felix. They all showed themselves incapable of dealing with the difficulties that surrounded them, or of contending with

the master minds with which they came in contact.

Charles Emmanuel IV., fondly imagining that the peace concluded by his father with France meant tranquillity and security to his kingdom, initiated religious processions and festivals throughout the land, hoping in this way to confer some sanctity on the crown which he reluctantly wore and which he always likened to a "crown of thorns." And such indeed it proved to him.

The French Republic, anxious to possess itself of Piedmont whence it could extend its rule and its ideas over the rest of the Peninsula, devised every means in its power to efface the reigning dynasty of Savoy, or at least to persuade it to withdraw from a land needed for other rulers and other systems. With this object in view a confederacy was proposed by Bonaparte, and though for a while Charles Emmanuel held aloof from a country which had renounced its God, and beheaded its king, he finally consented, on being persuaded that such

a step would infallibly lead to the safety and honour of his state. It proved, however, to be exactly the reverse. The alliance was, in fact, but a trap into which France had artfully inveigled the King, and by means of which she intended to remove from her path a state and a monarch whose existence was in the way of her own views and ambitions. While Bonaparte was fighting in Egypt, French troops were sent into Piedmont, and the King, in a moment of unpardonable weakness and folly, surrendered the citadel of Turin to the French. He was thereupon accused of betraying his country, and persuading himself that, in order to save his realm from destruction, only one line of conduct was open to him, he determined to abdicate. Charles Emmanuel IV. yielded to what he considered his duty, and signed a deed of abdication whereby he renounced his sovereignty and enjoined on his subjects obedience to the authorities set over them by France.

This decree was signed December 9, 1796, and the same night, in thick dark-

ness and in heavy falling snow and rain, Charles Emmanuel, accompanied by his wife, Marie Clothilde of France, left Turin forever. He refused to take with him the crown jewels and plate, or a large sum of money then in his possession, considering these things as appertaining to the crown he no longer wore. He then set sail for Sardinia, but before he was out of the country Turin broke out into every demonstration of joy over the fall of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic. The mob plundered the treasures so scrupulously abandoned by the King; they destroyed a quantity of precious documents foolishly left within their reach, causing thereby a loss to history that must forever be deplored. "And thus," says Balbo, "after four years of military defence and two of political defence" (sustained chiefly by Pirocca, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Balbo, Ambassador at Paris), "the House of Savoy fell, though not without dignity."¹

During Bonaparte's absence in Egypt

¹ Balbo: *op. cit.*, p. 402.

the French troops in Italy were defeated by the combined forces of the Russians and Austrians. Piedmont, freed from the French yoke, would have been ready to welcome back the dynasty of Savoy, in the person of Charles Emmanuel IV., had it not been for the treachery of Austria. The hatred felt for many years by Austria for the House of Savoy was an open secret. The ambition of the Hapsburgs to dispossess the kings of Sardinia of their rights in Piedmont, and to enter themselves as owners into that fair domain, is generally acknowledged as the reason why Charles Emmanuel IV. was kept out of the heritage of his forefathers.

But Austrian diplomacy and ambition were alike doomed to disappointment. Bonaparte's return into Italy and his victory at Marengo again changed the condition of affairs. Piedmont lapsed once more into a French dependency, and Charles Emmanuel, who had landed at Leghorn and resumed his crown, withdrew to Rome. From there he retired to

Caserta, then to Naples where he again abdicated, this time in favour of his brother, Victor Emmanuel I. His wife died in 1802. Shortly afterwards he entered the order of the Jesuits and died at Rome, totally blind, in 1819.

Seven years follow, of which no history relating to the House of Savoy can be said to exist. Victor Emmanuel I., who succeeded to the abdicated rights of his brother, in 1802, was a king without lands or subjects. He lived in retirement in Sardinia, and not till peace began to dawn upon Europe, through the treaty of Paris (1814), did he appear at all in public life. Part of his dominions was then restored to him, and more was added the following year, when at the Congress of Vienna (November 20, 1815) the whole of Savoy and other states in Italy were declared to belong to the realm of the kings of Sardinia.

But, like his father and his brother, Victor Emmanuel I. was not fitted to cope with the age in which he lived. The immense joy evinced throughout

Piedmont at his return was turned into irritation at some ill-advised and harsh measures with regard to laws and taxes ; and the chances that now and again presented themselves to the King for propitiating his people and benefiting his country he invariably threw away, more, perhaps, through want of discernment than through harshness or intention. Oppressed by the secret, ever-growing revolutionary societies that swarmed throughout Italy, seeking to bestow on the people a liberty and an independence looked for in vain from their leaders and rulers, Victor Emmanuel I. was unable to make headway. He had endeavoured, though too late, to profit by the wisdom and advice of his Minister, Prospero Balbo, but sooner than break faith with his allies and change the existing form of his government into a constitutional monarchy, he resigned in favour of his brother, Charles Felix, appointing his cousin, Charles Albert, Prince of Carignan, Regent of the kingdom till his brother could assume office.

The reign of Charles Felix was even less advantageous to the country than the reigns of his brothers had been. His dislike, or rather his hatred, of Charles Albert, heir presumptive to the throne, blinded him to the good qualities of that Prince, and prevented a union of ideas and action between the two men that would have proved beneficial to the state. Charles Felix's inability to stem the tide of revolution in Piedmont (1821) is a convincing proof of his incapacity as a ruler, while the acts of cruelty to which he consented, when once the revolution had been quelled, have left an indelible stain on his character.

The moral turpitude of Charles Felix is further shown in his adhesion to Austria in order to strengthen himself against his own subjects, whose love he never won and whose interests and susceptibilities he never studied. Austria had long been herself the deadliest foe of "Casa Savoia," while, as has already been pointed out, the object of Austrian ambition was to possess herself of Piedmont, and on the ruins of

the House of Savoy to build up in Italy an empire in which a modern Cæsar might extend his sway over the whole peninsula. This scheme, however, was not destined to take form. The reconciliation between Charles Felix and Charles Albert, even if only nominal, had, nevertheless, the effect of restoring public confidence and uniting the scattered interests of the people, enabling them henceforward to act in concert against the overweening pretensions of the House of Hapsburg.

Charles Felix, unlike his grandfather, took no interest in the army ; but, on the other hand, he devoted himself to the navy, and the efficiency to which, under his supervision, this branch of the national defence was brought, was successfully proved on the occasion of the bombardment of Tripoli (1825), when the honour of the Sardinian flag, outraged a short while before, was fully vindicated and the credit of the navy firmly established.

Charles Felix, the last representative of the elder branch of the House of Savoy, died, as his brother had died before him,

without leaving a son ; Charles Albert, Prince of Savoy-Carignan, the direct descendant of Thomas, the youngest son of Charles Emmanuel I., the Great, succeeded to the family honours.

Before passing on to the history of this younger branch of the House of Savoy, it may be well to glance for a moment at the encouragement given by many of the princes to architecture. It would seem as though this art and all connected with it, such as engineering and designing, engrossed them somewhat, though not wholly, to the exclusion of other arts, and that, above everything else, their tastes and talents found development in building. We read of churches, palaces, monasteries, villas, and theatres founded and erected by well-nigh every prince in turn, of high-roads planned, executed, and maintained, of means of communication facilitated by bridges, viaducts and parapets, and of similar measures for improving the passes and highways through the land, while the fine buildings in Turin and elsewhere attest to their love of architectural display. Under

Victor Amadeus II. the Superga, Stupigini, and the Churches of St. Philip and of St. Christina were erected, and the *façade* and the great staircase of the Palazzo Madama at Turin were completed. Charles Felix, also, left his mark in the Piedmontese capital, in the great square and theatre that are called by his name, while many a princess of the House left a memorial of her piety and generosity by founding and endowing one or other of the numerous sacred edifices with which the country abounds. Foremost among these may be mentioned the Church of Brou, begun by Duchess Margaret of Bourbon, first wife of Philip II., in fulfilment of a vow for her husband's recovery from sickness. This edifice was completed after a labour of fifteen years, and at a cost of twenty-five millions of francs, by her daughter-in-law, Margaret of Austria, second wife of Philibert II., after the death of her youthful husband.

In returning to the history of Charles Albert, it is to be remembered that the position in which he had been placed at the

moment of the abdication of Victor Amadeus IV., had brought him in contact with his subjects in a false light. He had been named Regent till Charles Felix could assume office, and his regency was not calculated to show off his powers to advantage. His position as heir presumptive placed him in a delicate attitude with regard to the new King, whose views, fashioned on worn-out and narrow lines, were little in keeping with the more advanced ideas of his young kinsman; and the consideration shown by the Prince of Carignan for the King's weaknesses has been severely blamed by those who, perhaps, make hardly enough allowance for the difficult situation in which he found himself. Compelled by the King's enmity to live for a while out of the kingdom, he retired first to Florence, and from there to Spain, where he fought valiantly for the establishment of constitutional rights. When the war ended he was allowed to return to Turin.

Charles Felix's death in 1831 having made him King of Sardinia, he lost no

time in devoting himself to the reforms which, from his earliest youth, he had desired to bring about in the kingdom. The line of action which he had drawn up for himself was as follows : “ To direct all our energies to the country’s highest good ; to found therein a strong government based on just and equable laws for all in the sight of God ; to rescue our royal authority from the danger of committing weighty errors of injustice ; to order an administration that shall be above intrigue and personal considerations, well thought out and ever steadfastly advancing in a spirit of progress ; to facilitate and promote every kind of industry ; to honour and reward merit in whatever class it may be found ; to reorganise an army that shall be fit to support with glory the national honour and independence ; to introduce into the administration of finance a regularity, an economy, an integrity, and a strictness such as will enable us to undertake great things and at the same time lighten the burdens of the people ; to regulate public affairs in such a manner that full and perfect lib-

erty (save for doing ill) shall have free scope around us."

This splendid programme was but partially carried out by Charles Albert. By nature weak, irresolute, and diffident, he was incapable of prompt or effective action, and his choice of men and ministers in no way helped to rectify the errors of his own shortcomings. With a keen desire to advance the independence of Piedmont, and indeed of Italy, he was fearful of encouraging liberty, and trembled lest a step in that direction would undo the work of independence for which he declared himself and his sons ready to fight to the death. This question of Italy's independence was the ruling passion of his life; he drew a hard-and-fast line between it and liberty, fearful lest the division should ever be transgressed, and most of his waverings and delays must be ascribed to the anxiety he underwent lest any movement on his part should imperil his cherished dream.

To dwell, however, on the political causes which brought about the revolu-

tions of 1831 and of 1848 would be beyond the limits and purpose of this survey, as would be also a detailed account of Charles Albert's actions and character. One of the principal acts of his reign must, however, be mentioned : the promulgation of the " Statuto," or charter which gave to his subjects the rights of a constitutional government, and confirmed to them the privileges which they had striven so long to obtain. This " Statuto " was formulated on February 8, 1848, and, but a few days after it had been issued, the revolution which overturned Louis Philippe broke out in France and spread rapidly into Italy. A vigorous movement made against the Austrians at Milan succeeded, after five days of splendid fighting, in expelling them ; but before the triumph was fully established, without an ally to second him, without even a well-defined line of policy whereby to attract a following, Charles Albert declared war against the Emperor of Austria, and the small kingdom of Piedmont became to all Italy the lodestar of redemption, the pivot whereon

hung all the issues of Italy's independence or slavery. The movement spread swiftly through the land, and from Papal Rome, from ducal Tuscany, from the great quadrilateral of Peschiera, Mantua, Verona, and Legnano flashed forth, under different leaders, swords that had but one aim—the liberation of Italy from a foreign yoke.

All eyes were turned towards Piedmont, where Charles Albert, as the leader in this war for independence, crossed the Ticino, and strove to expel the Austrians who still remained in Lombardy and the "Veneto." His troops were victorious at Goito, Pastrengo, Peschiera, Rivoli, and Governolo; but these successes were followed by reverses, and at Cornuda, Sta. Lucia, Curtatone, Montanara, Custoza, Volta, and Rivoli the imperial forces, far superior in number and discipline to the Italians, triumphed. An armistice was concluded in August, and Austrian supremacy again threatened to resume its sway over the land.

To avert so dreaded an evil Charles Albert deemed no other measure possible

but war. On March 24, 1849, he declared the armistice at an end, and began again the war for independence. His efforts were, however, in vain, the patriots being defeated in several places, and the overthrow of the Piedmontese army on the field of Novara convinced Charles Albert of the futility of resistance. Persuaded that his leadership was injurious to the cause, he abdicated on the following day, naming his eldest son, Victor Emmanuel II., as his successor, and retired to Portugal, where, four months afterwards (July 28, 1849), he died.

To turn to the story of Victor Emmanuel II. is a pleasant relief after that of his immediate predecessors. His character, sparkling with life, vigour, determination, and romance, is a more grateful theme than the irresolution of Charles Albert or the bigotry of Charles Emmanuel IV. The part played by the *Re Galantuomo* under adverse and difficult circumstances, the insight he possessed into character, the remarkable men he gathered around him, and the love and devotion he in-

spired, stamp him as a man born to command. The first king of a united and independent kingdom of Italy, his reign marks an era in history.

The condition of Italy at the moment of Charles Albert's abdication and Victor Emmanuel's accession presented a desperate outlook. The series of Austrian victories crowned at Novara had destroyed the hopes of union and freedom, and each region where revolt and patriotism had gone hand in hand sank back to await a more propitious moment. For the vision of independence, though dimmed, was not extinguished, and the belief that had been silently growing for years was not to be annihilated even by defeat and overthrow. The very nature of the peril called out the energy of the people.

But many years of self-discipline were needed before victory could be secured to Italy. The peace dictated by Austria on the battle-field of Novara, distasteful as it was to the young King, gave him leisure to set in order the affairs of the kingdom, to reorganise the army, and to refill the

exchequer, which had been emptied by the late wars. With the co-operation of his two great ministers, Massimo d'Azeglio and Camillo Cavour, Victor Emmanuel set himself to the work of reorganisation and reform. From correcting past blunders and stupidities, from renovating every form of legislation, from reconstructing all that was of merit in the government,—from all these laborious, weary tasks Victor Emmanuel never swerved; and he never lost sight of his purpose—the expulsion of the Austrians and the freedom of Italy.

By degrees this goal was won. Piedmont gradually worked her way to the front among the nations of Europe, to become a power to be needed and courted. Upon the breaking out of the Crimean War (1853), England and France invited Piedmont to join with them against Russia, an invitation that was promptly accepted. Fifteen thousand Piedmontese under the command of General la Marmora fought valiantly by the side of their English and French allies, and particularly

distinguished themselves at the battle of Cernaia (August 16, 1855). The following year (1856) the Congress of Paris was convened, when peace with Russia was concluded. The question of Italian unity was brought forward by Cavour, who thought his country deserved some recognition for the services so faithfully given to the allies in the Crimea, but his proposition did not meet with approval; hope was again deferred, and Italy had once more to wait patiently.

Relief was at hand. Napoleon III. joined to a generous ardour for Italy's liberation the wisdom to recognise that that country free and united would prove a desirable ally and protector for his own empire and dynasty. He accordingly entered into negotiations with Cavour, and signed a treaty at Plombières (July, 1858) which provoked Austria and drove her to declare war against the new federation. This was exactly what the allies wished to bring about, and Napoleon III. marched into Italy at the head of a large force. He was joined by Victor Emman-

uel in command of his Piedmontese army, and the combined forces defeated the Austrians successively at Montebello, Palestro, Magenta, Solferino, Melegnano, and San Martino. Peace was signed at Villafranca (July, 1859), when Lombardy, Parma, Piacenza, Modena, and Tuscany were united to Piedmont. The provinces of Savoy and Nice, however, had to be handed over to France as the price for the help given. Bitterly must Victor Emmanuel II. have realised the truth preached of old by the Greeks, that "the gods sell everything, but at a price," when he was forced to surrender the home and burial-place of his ancestors in exchange for the new kingdom he was about to inaugurate.

Fresh victories under Garibaldi in the south of the peninsula were meanwhile completing the work of unity and independence. In Naples the Bourbons were expelled; the kingdom of the Two Sicilies recognised Victor Emmanuel as their sovereign, and on February 26, 1861, the Senate and Parliament of Sardinia

unanimously declared Victor Emmanuel II. and his descendants "Kings of Italy."

The kingdom was not yet complete; for one of the fairest jewels in the diadem of United Italy was wanting,—“the Pearl of the Adriatic,” Venice, “the eldest child of liberty,” was still an Austrian possession. Again must a price be paid for the perfecting of the vision. Blood had again to stain the land ere Venice could belong to Italy. In 1866 war broke out between Austria and Prussia, and Italy, allied to the latter power, attacked Austria. Two terrible defeats befell the Italian arms at Custoza and Lissa, but the grand victory of the Prussians at Sadowa (July 3, 1866) routed the Austrian power and brought about the desired end. Through the mediation and intervention of Napoleon III., at the treaty of Prague, Venice and the “Veneto” were given back to Italy, and the seal was thus set to the glorious work of unity and independence.

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDERS OF THE HOUSE OF SAVOY.

ADELAIDE OF SUSA. THE EMPRESS

BERTHA. (1003-1091.)

FOR antiquity of origin and continuity of succession, the House of Savoy stands in the foremost rank of the reigning Houses of Europe. One family alone has furnished, in direct descent, the counts, dukes, and kings that successively ruled over the destinies of the land, and has given to Savoy a genealogy of forty princes, who, sprung from one lineage, reigned in uninterrupted line and handed down the traditions of a common ancestry through no less than twenty-seven generations. Apart from the interest attaching to the historical aspect of this family, there is a great charm in dwelling on the doings of these princes and princesses. For, underlying the current of their story

is a substratum of poetry and romance that entices the mind away from a dry record of facts and statistics, and to the dramatic interest surrounding the House of Savoy gives a force not to be gainsaid or resisted.

Before enlarging on the doings and characteristics of these royal personages, however, it would be well to glance at the conditions and features of the land in which they lived and died, and, so far as may be, to render the scenes where their lives were passed familiar to all whose interest in such matters may be excited. The country of Savoy, to speak actually of the territory that had for its boundaries Italy, Switzerland, and France, contains within its limits some of the highest peaks of the Alps, varied with the loveliest scenery. Nature has showered her gifts with a lavish hand on Savoy. Mountains, lakes, and valleys, with rivers winding through fertile plains where corn, wine, and oil abound, make glad the heart and eye of man, while peaked crags, where castles perch like nests on the rocky heights, serve to increase the picturesque effect,

and furnish the imagination with tales and legends of fights and maraudings, of tournaments, and of feats of chivalry and romance that took place of old within their rock-bound walls. The counts of Savoy might well be proud of such an heritage; while the advantage they gained from the geographical position of their fair country was one that they learnt, betimes, to appreciate and to put to its full value.

The first historical mention of Savoy—or, as it was first called, Sapaudia, or Sabaudia—was in 443, when “in the southeast of Gaul, the Burgundians, after many wars and some reverses, established themselves, with the consent of the Romans, in the district then called Sapaudia, and now Savoy,”¹ or, as Gibbon states, in a way less flattering to the Burgundian settlers: “Twenty thousand Burgundians were slain in battle, and the remains of the nation humbly accepted a dependent seat in the mountains of Savoy.”² This

¹ Hodgkin: *Invaders of Italy*, vol. ii., book ii., p. 110.

² Gibbon: *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iv., ch. xxxv., p. 224.

was immediately after the Goths, under Theodoric, had besieged Narbonne, and when the opposition, which for a moment threatened the greatness of Rome, was overcome by the skill and activity of Aetius.

The country of Savoy was incorporated by the Burgundians into the kingdom formed by them between the Rhone, the Saone, and the Alps, and, together with Burgundy, fell under the dominion of the Frank kings in 534. During Charlemagne's reign Savoy was split into a heap of different provinces, all under feudal jurisdiction. But on the death of Charlemagne (814), Savoy, in common with other states, endeavoured to assert her independence and free herself from the insignificant condition to which she had been reduced.

Savoy was not yet able, however, to dispense with the support of her old protector, and for some years to come her fortunes were involved in those of Burgundy, when she formed part of the upper kingdom into which that realm had

been raised by Rudolph, who ruled as Marquis over Savoy, and who caused himself to be crowned King of Burgundy in 888 at the Abbey Church of St. Maurice, in the Canton Valais. His kingdom was merged into that of Lower Burgundy in 933 (when the realm extended from Basle to the mouths of the Rhone). But it became extinct a century after, on the death, without heirs, of King Rudolph III. This monarch inspired more respect from his private virtues than from his capabilities as a ruler, and his surname, "the Worthless," was bestowed on him as much for his inability as a statesman as for incompetence as a warrior. He provoked the resentment of his subjects by his readiness to place himself and them under the vassalage of the German Emperor; and the weakness and servility evinced by their monarch aroused a counter-spirit of rebellion and independence on the part of his barons. This fomented the dissatisfaction rife throughout the land, and fostered the civil war then raging between King Rudolph and his nephew,

Eude, Count of Champagne. During the agitated reign of this last Burgundian king, the founders of two great families came into prominent notice, and created for themselves a name and a position henceforward to rank high in the history of Savoy. The first of these was Umberto delle Bianchemani, or Humbert of the White Hands, as the literal rendering in English would be. The second was Odelrico Manfredi, Count of Turin and Marquis of Italy, whose successors were also known as Marquises of Susa.

A mystery surrounds the birth and parentage of Humbert of the White Hands, a mystery that neither time nor learning has unravelled. It may, indeed, be said rather to have increased under the weight of these two influences, and to have become intensified as years and researches have run their respective courses. The uncertainty that presides over the origin of this founder of the House of Savoy has swept away any basis whereon to build an assured conviction as to the date or place of

his birth ; while the allegations put forward as to his parentage are made with a reserve and discrepancy not likely to inspire confidence. One writer, indeed, asserts that when you can prove the continuity of a dynasty through eight centuries, you may dispense with an authentic record of the parentage of the founder of that dynasty. But most Savoyard historians seek to accredit their hero with a genealogy as perfect as that which he transmitted, and, accordingly, endeavour to establish an undeniable pedigree for the White-handed Count of Savoy.

A quaint old French chronicler maintains that Humbert was the son of a "moult preux Cheuallier," himself the son of one Hugh of Saxony, and nephew of Otho III., Emperor of Germany. He tells also how this "Cheuallier Monseigneur Berauld" was placed, on his father's death, under the guardianship of his imperial uncle, whose love for him was great, though he was compelled to banish him from Germany, young Berauld having discovered that the Empress was guilty

of infidelity toward her husband. The knight (for Otho advanced him to this dignity before he left Germany) went forth in search of adventure. Success invariably attended his undertakings. His prowess in every combat was unequalled ; no foe could stand before him ; no country could dispense with his services, on the battle-field or in the council-chamber. He conquered the County of Moriana, he overcame the lords of Susa and Piedmont, and on the death of Rudolph, the last King of Burgundy (or, as the chronicle calls him, "King of Arles"), he was appointed Governor-General over the land.

"Monseigneur Berauld" died in 1026, and was buried in the "mestre eglise d'Arles." His son Humbert, who succeeded to his honours, had, according to the chronicle, "*les plus belles mains que nulz peust avoir, il fust appelle Humbert aulz blanches mains le quel nom il porta tous les iours de sa vie.*" Another explanation is that, owing to the untarnished honour of the Count, and to his scrupulously upright

behaviour in all his dealings, he obtained this honourable name.¹ Most writers see in this "Monseigneur Berauld" of the chronicle, one Beroldo, or Geroldo, of Saxony, who is also, and more generally, spoken of as Otho William, Duke of Burgundy. The honour of being Count Humbert's father is occasionally claimed for this Duke, though another competitor for the same distinction is also to be found in the person of Manasse, Count of Savoy. Opinions of all sorts, however, prevail as to the parentage of the White-handed Count, and he is alternately accredited with a Saxon or an Italian origin, according to the bent and sympathies of his biographer.

Preference for a Saxon ancestry gains the larger and more reliable number of followers, and the idea of such an ancestry is hallowed by popular tradition unswerv-

¹ It is painful to destroy this legend, and to confess that this surname of "Biancamano" is not mentioned till after the year 1340, when it appears for the first time in the *Obituaire de Hautecombe*. No contemporary histories or documents allude to it in connection with Humbert. It is not till three hundred years after his death that we first meet with it.

ingly through eight centuries, and worthy, therefore, of some credence. This has but been strengthened by the confirming hand of Time. The heraldic devices of the Houses of Savoy and Saxony also testify to a close affinity; both bore the Saxon eagle; both had supporters formed of two lions; both, for centuries, quartered a shield on which was inscribed the motto, "Saxe." Both Houses owned St. Maurice as their patron saint, while in matters relating to law and administration similar points existed which serve to confirm the hypothesis that one and the same origin may be ascribed to the Saxon and the Savoyard dynasties. On the other hand, another theory is extant that claims an Italian pedigree for the House of Savoy, and declares it to be descended from the marquises of Ivrea and their issue, Berenger II. and Adalberto, Kings of Italy. This theory, which would find in one and the same dynasty the first and the present King of Italy, is a poetic one; and, to a certain extent, some ground for this reasoning may exist, but nothing positive can be as-

serted definitively on either side, though the conjecture as to a Saxon pedigree prevails over that of an Italian one.

The question as to Count Humbert's mother, though somewhat involved, is not so vague as that relating to his father. The generally accepted idea is that she was Ermengarde, who, in 1011, married, as her second husband, King Rudolph III., of Burgundy. She was then a widow with two sons, and, though her name and condition are unknown, little doubt exists that she was a person of noble birth, fit, from qualities and rank, to be chosen as Queen, and that her sons were of equally high lineage, in no way unworthy—at least as regards their rank—to be recognised as the King's stepsons. One of these sons is frequently mentioned in the records of that period, and his name is often coupled with that of King Rudolph. In a donation made of the Villa of Lemens by the King and Queen to Itterio, Abbot of Ainay, Count Humbert's signature is affixed immediately after those of the royal donors; and in

several other documents his name as "signum Umberti Comititis" appears among the foremost in the land, either taking precedence of the lords spiritual, or immediately after them and before any of the lords temporal. It is evident that he was beloved and influential, not only at his stepfather's court, but also at that of the German Emperor; while his presence at the interviews that took place between Rudolph and Conrad, implies that he was in the confidence of both.

The friendly attitude adopted by Humbert toward Conrad the Salic is manifest on several occasions. The readiness shown by King Rudolph to acknowledge the German Emperor as his suzerain, had been one of the chief causes of discord between him and his subjects. The only powerful vassal that supported the King's policy in this respect was his stepson, Humbert, who, together with Queen Ermengarde, was present once at Strasbourg and another time at Mayence, when Rudolph for his kingdom swore fealty to Conrad as his liege lord.

On Rudolph's death, in 1032, the dying monarch directed that the ring and spear of St. Maurice be immediately conveyed to the Emperor ; an act that testified to the transfer of the Burgundian sovereignty to that of Germany, these pledges being emblematic of the royal state of Burgundy. But the lords of the latter country were not minded to accept subservience to Germany without a protest. A strong party favoured the claims of the late King's nephew, Oddo, or Eude, Count of Champagne, to the throne, and not till two years after Rudolph's death, did the Imperial party become possessed of the rights bequeathed by the late monarch to Conrad. Count Humbert warmly espoused the Emperor's cause ; the widowed Ermengarde did the same, and much of the success gained by the Emperor was due to their support. Conrad was not ungrateful. He rewarded Humbert by conferring on him the dignity of Governor of Burgundy ; he confirmed to him the lordship of Salmorenc and other possessions in the County of Savoy. These had

been bequeathed to Humbert by his mother, who, in her turn, had received them by a royal deed of gift from King Rudolph during his lifetime. The Count's authority was also recognised throughout the lands of Nyon, Aosta, Moriana, Savoy, Belley, Chablais, and Tarantasia. His position being thus secured, he was able to establish yet more firmly his power, and to take measures to insure the steady and uninterrupted sequence of the dynasty he was now about to found.

The chief step he took to bring about this result was to negotiate a marriage for his son, Oddo, or Oddone, with Adelaide, Countess of Turin, the daughter and heiress of Odelrico Manfredi, Marquis of Susa, and of Bertha, the daughter of Otbert, Count of Milan, and founder of the House of Este. This marriage took place before Count Humbert's death (a date that can be fixed only as occurring after the year 1056) and was of special benefit to the House of Savoy in that it consolidated the rising fortune of the family, and brought with it an increase of



then bequeathed to Humbert by his mother, who, in her turn, had received them by a royal deed of gift from Henry I. of England during his life time. The Count's authority was also recognised through the lands of Nyon, Aosta, Marcellin, Bugey, Belley, Chablais, and Gex. His position being thus well established, he was able to establish a permanent power, and to take measures for a steady and unintermitting dynasty he was now able to do.

The chief step he took to secure this result was to marry his daughter for his son, Oddo, or Odorico, with Adelaide, Countess of Turin, the daughter and heiress of Oddoico Manfredi, Marquis of Saluz, and of Martha, the daughter of Count A. of Milan, and founder of the House of Visconti. This marriage took place in 1163, a few years after Humbert's death (a date which is fixed only as occurring between 1155 and 1156) and was of special importance to the House of Savoy in that it secured the rising fortune of the latter, and brought with it an increase of



Oddo Humberti I filius

*Sabaudie, Mauriengue Comes IV. Secusie, & Italię
Marchio, in Sabaudie iura, fratre sine sobole defuncto,
succedens, euitam ditionem nuptijs Adelaidis à Secusis,
que à patre Magistro Marchione Secusino, hereditario
iure Secusie Marchionatum, Taurinensem agrum, &
Augustam Salassorum acceperat facili negotio protulauit*

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territories and wealth. For Adelaide's father was not only the descendant of Arduino, Marquis of Ivrea and King of Italy, but he was possessed, besides, of vast lands in the Counties of Vercelli, Ivrea, Alba, Albenga, Ventimiglia, Parma, and Piacenza, and all these possessions formed part of the dower of his daughter and sole heiress, Adelaide of Susa.

The rich estates that Adelaide inherited from her father caused her hand to be eagerly sought in marriage by the princes of neighbouring as well as distant lands. Twice she had been a bride before the White-handed Count of Savoy was able to secure the richly portioned widow in marriage for his son. And lucky was it for the House of Savoy that to neither of her first husbands had Adelaide borne any children. First married in 1034, or in the following year, to Herman, Duke of Swabia, who died in 1038, she then became the wife of Henry of Montferrat, Marquis of Aleramo; and after his death, the childless widow sought consolation and happiness in her marriage (which

took place about 1046) with Oddone of Savoy. This marriage was crowned by the birth of three sons and two daughters. But Oddone died in 1060, and Adelaide was again bereft of a husband. The widowed state, however, was not one that commended itself to her, and though she had had three consorts, was the mother of five children, and was between forty-five and forty-six years of age, she contemplated doffing her weeds and appearing as a bride for the fourth time. History is silent as to who the suitor may have been, and beyond a wild conjecture, all in the dark, that he must have been of a bold, enterprising nature, no conclusion can be formed as to his personality. Some scruples, though, seem to have weighed with the widowed Countess; and before determining on her fourth venture, she consulted St. Peter Damiani as to the advisability of her action. The holy Father, though granting that a plurality of marriages may not in itself exclude a devout soul from entering the kingdom of heaven, was, nevertheless, of opinion

that the Countess had better abstain from the step, and with much courtesy recommended her to renounce this contemplated union. He pointed out, at the same time, the many duties that awaited her, the number of relatives that still looked to her as their head and arbiter, and the responsibilities devolving on her as ruler of the state, and the guardian of her fatherless children.

To these duties Adelaide accordingly devoted herself, finding scope in such occupations for her talents of heart and mind, and applying herself to the work for which her powers were particularly adapted. There was room in every way for these powers. The state formed by her own and her husband's possessions had swelled into an important province. It required great firmness of rule and soundness of administration to bind into one the elements needed for the development and aggrandisement of a country. Savoy was gradually coming to the fore among the nations. She was beginning to take her place as a power whose geo-

graphical position alone entitled her to consideration, whose policy would affect that of neighbouring states and compel them to recognise her as one of themselves. And it is to Adelaide of Susa that much of the greatness is owed that fell eventually to the lot of Savoy. Under the Countess's able sway, the little state rose from a somewhat inferior position to one of ever-increasing weight and influence; Savoy's importance widened; her rulers took their place among the princes of Europe; emperors and kings sought their brides from among the daughters and descendants of Humbert of the White Hands, and an alliance with Savoy was courted by the reigning potentates of Christendom; while, on the other hand, a war with her was dreaded.

The events of Adelaide's reign, however, can hardly be called romantic or poetic. Her thoughts and deeds were all cast in too serious a mould for the lighter form of history that this book would fain portray.

But though we may not gather any-

The Empress Bertha III

thing to enliven the pages devoted to a sketch of Adelaide's history, those that concern her daughter Bertha furnish different material, and cause us to admire the energy of mind and readiness of wit that the daughter doubtless inherited, in no small degree, from her talented, resolute mother, and of which she gave proof on more than one occasion.

Fate had decreed that early in life Bertha of Savoy should be married to Henry of Germany, afterward the Emperor Henry IV. This marriage was forced on the young monarch against his inclinations, and, in spite of his efforts to escape from the match, he was compelled to espouse Bertha of Savoy. He considered her plain, unattractive, and dull. He expressed a contempt and a dislike for her that he was at no pains to conceal, and he omitted no opportunity for insulting and neglecting her. In 1056 Henry succeeded to the Imperial throne, and he then adopted more active measures than he had hitherto dared to put into practice for ridding himself of a wife whose chief

defect was love of her husband. The Emperor tried by every means in his power to force Bertha to commit herself in such a way as to enable him lawfully to obtain a divorce from her : he laid snares and temptations in the path of his guileless and honourable wife, in order to bring about her certain condemnation.

But the Empress was far from being the stupid, blundering woman the Emperor both thought and wished her to be ; she was not long in discovering the pitfalls prepared for her. And, her eyes once opened, she perceived what line of action to pursue. Intelligent and quick-sighted, she was also loyal and devoted, and she gave no occasion for any offence such as her husband would have welcomed. With tact and acumen she avoided the traps he continually laid for her.

Despairing of the accomplishment of his ends, the Emperor at last resorted to an unworthy trick : he persuaded one of his boon companions to seduce the Empress, at any cost, from her virtuous mode

of living, promising to screen him in case of discovery, and to reward him in case of success. The courtier did his best to carry out the Imperial scheme, but was repulsed with all the anger and disdain natural to a high-minded wife and woman. Notwithstanding repeated rebuffs, he continued to urge his contemptible suit, and with such confidence and assurance that the Empress's suspicions were aroused. No doubt remained in her mind that her husband was at the bottom of a new plot. She resolved, thereupon, to play with the edged tools placed in her hand, and to give the Emperor a proof of her ingenuity. She accordingly feigned to yield at last to her would-be lover, and to listen to his overtures. So she encouraged the man in his advances, and, after much seeming reluctance, she fixed the hour when he should be admitted, by stealth, late one night, into her apartment.

The Emperor, speedily informed by his coadjutor of the pending success of his intrigue, was overjoyed at the idea of soon having a lawful excuse whereby to rid

himself of his wedded wife. He was hardly able to contain himself. He announced to the privileged gallant his intention to accompany him to Bertha's chamber, in order to take part in his wife's shame, and bear testimony, when required, to her infidelity.

At the given hour, the conspirators repaired to Bertha's rooms. A flicker from a half-closed door had led them through the gloom that reigned elsewhere. The dim reflection from some shaded rushlights in the antechamber leading to the Empress's bedroom, the silence that pervaded the palace, the absence of either sentinel or watcher, convinced the conspirators that the plot was working according to their expectations ; the nocturnal visitor was not only expected, but desired ; woman's virtue was but a frail and despicable thing after all.

Stifling his glee and satisfaction, the Emperor led the way. The arrangement between him and his colleague was that he should slip unobserved into the room, and there, hid in some dark corner, he could

be a hidden witness of the rendezvous. He then would blazon his wife's shame abroad throughout the whole of Europe.

Pushing warily through the half-open door, the Emperor was dismayed to hear the door closed hastily behind him, the bolt quickly drawn, and all question of ingress or exit hopelessly excluded. Behold him now in his wife's room, his companion locked outside, he himself filling the place of one who had come bent on a deed of dishonour. Had some one at court whispered to the Empress the part he meant to play in the night's proceedings? or had he simply fallen into the trap laid for another's punishment, and in which he himself was so artfully caught?

Bewildered, Henry stood for a while, and was about to grope his way back to the door, when a soft hand, placed in his, led him on, and a voice that he recognised as that of his wife bade him advance and fear nothing. For, though she was the wife of his sovereign, was she not, she said, also the woman who had flung away pride and reserve, nay, virtue itself, for

his sake, whose love for him had broken down every barrier that womanly modesty or Imperial dignity might have placed between them?

This, however, was but the prelude to the performance. Leading her husband on with words of encouragement and endearment, to which Henry dared not reply, for fear of betraying his personality, Bertha brought him into her bedchamber, where his eyes, becoming accustomed to the dim light, perceived a bevy of women standing in a corner of the room, expecting, as he imagined, a word from the Empress to withdraw. But the night was to be one of surprises. While the Emperor, standing in bewilderment and silence, was wondering what would happen next, the Empress clapped her hands, and at the given signal the women fell upon the intruder, belabouring him with sticks and canes, and heaping on him a string of abusive epithets. At first he was too much taken aback at the suddenness of the assault to utter any protest.

Thick, fast, and furious the blows rained

upon him, while derisive comments on the "wretch that would sully the fair name of his Empress," "the villain that would violate the honour of his sovereign's wife," poured in a torrent of indignation from the lips of the excited women, who thronged round the unsuspected Emperor, and thrashed him with merciless delight. In vain Henry sought to ward off the blows; in vain he shouted that he was the Emperor, striving, at the same time, to establish his own identity and his right to find himself in his wife's room. All was to no purpose. He was answered by jeers from Bertha; the Emperor had no need to steal like a thief in the dark to a room that was always open to him; a seducer so vile and so dishonourable might try to pass himself off as the Emperor, but no one would believe him, and he richly deserved the treatment he had received for endeavouring to pose as the husband of the woman whose honour he was so ready to sacrifice.

When the exhausted women could no longer continue their chastisement, and

the series of injurious reproaches were drained of their irony, the bruised and battered monarch was hastened out of the room, gnashing his teeth with rage and mortification.

After this episode, Henry tried more eagerly than before to obtain a divorce, and on one occasion he almost succeeded. He bribed Siegfried, Bishop of Mayence, to convoke a Diet in that city (1069), and urged on him the advantages that would accrue to him if he would but espouse the Imperial cause, no matter how unjust that cause might be. But the clergy that were convened proved recalcitrant, and the Empress—chiefly through the agency of St. Peter Damiani—was adjudged innocent, and Henry again saw his aims defeated.

But in spite of all her husband's infidelities and persecutions, Bertha never wavered from her duty as a wife; and the vows of love and devotion she had plighted in early youth were faithfully carried out to her life's end. Not once did she fail Henry. Nor did the trials to which her

constancy and loyalty were put ever find her wanting. For, when the Emperor was called on to pass through a period of mortification and humiliation such as few crowned heads have ever undergone, when every man's hand was against him, and he an alien and an outcast from his throne and country, Bertha alone stood by him. Bertha's devotion was, indeed, put to an extraordinary test. Henry's treatment of his barons had aroused their wrath, and they appealed to Gregory VII., imploring him to mediate between them and their liege lord. Gregory thereupon summoned Henry to Rome, a summons that the Emperor set at naught. Henry determined, instead, to convene a council of his own bishops, who, at his instigation, deposed the Pope. This took place in 1076, at Worms, and Gregory retaliated by excommunicating the Emperor, who in the pride of youth and power (he was but twenty-five) laughed the sentence to scorn. But his subjects treated the matter differently. They fell away from their allegiance ; they elected in Henry's stead

his brother-in-law, Rudolph, Duke of Swabia. So no course remained open to Henry but to conform to the Papal summons and proceed to Rome and implore for pardon.

The meeting between the Emperor and the Pope is one of the most picturesque events in history, and forms a turning-point in the amiable relations that for many years had existed between the heads of the Church and of the State in Europe. In the person of Pope Gregory VII. were combined all the characteristics of boundless ambition, with a steadfastness of purpose and a callousness to human affections that made him a dangerous foe, one not to be lightly thwarted or opposed. His object was to reverse the condition of affairs with regard to the Church and the Empire. He found the former depending on the latter. He succeeded in making the Church supreme, and in raising the position of the Pontiffs to a higher grade than that enjoyed by any monarch in Europe.

Henry IV., though a capable and clever

prince, was no match for Gregory. He failed altogether to grasp the object the Pope had in view, and realised only when it was too late that Gregory was a man to be propitiated, and that opposition to him, unless united to invincible strength, could but result in defeat. No option, therefore, remained to Henry but to go to Italy, notwithstanding the difficulties that such a journey presented. The season was far advanced; the winter of the year 1077 proved to be one of exceptional severity; the Dukes of Bavaria, of Swabia, and of Carinthia forbade him a passage across their territories; and the passes, wrapped in snow and ice, lay in the dominions of Bertha's family, whose feelings toward Henry were most inimical.

But Bertha was too faithful and loyal to gain any concessions for herself out of the just resentment felt by her family. She drew on their love for her only in order to further her husband's cause, and she persuaded her mother and brother to allow Henry to pass through Savoy and proceed unmolested into Italy. They granted

this permission, however, only on the Emperor's consenting to cede the Province of Bugey to the House of Savoy.

That journey must have cost Henry dear in every sense of the word. He had had to bow his will to that of the Pope, to give up a province to his wife's relations; he also had to realise that the ill-will felt toward him was wide-spread and deep-seated. The lesson, too, daily held up to him, of returning good for evil, as manifested by the presence of his patient wife, can hardly have been an unmitigated pleasure to a man of the Emperor's temperament. Dragged across the frozen mountain heights, enveloped in an ox's hide, the Empress journeyed with her husband into Italy until they reached the fortress of Canossa, where Pope Gregory VII. was staying as the guest of the Countess Mathilde of Tuscany.

The position occupied by Countess Mathilde toward the successors of St. Peter, made her a personage of great importance in all matters relating to the Church. "Her whole existence," says

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Sismondi, "had but one object, the exaltation of the Holy See ; during her life she consecrated her powers to serve the Popes, and when she died she bequeathed her goods to the Chair of St. Peter. She was twice married : first to Godfrey the Young, of Lorraine, afterward to Guelf V., of Bavaria. But ambition or fanaticism left no place in her heart for love ; she put away both her husbands, neither of whom she considered sufficiently devoted to the Holy See, and she dedicated herself entirely to the defence of the Popes."¹

To enlist Mathilde's sympathies became the object of Henry's endeavours ; and Adelaide of Susa, who, with her son Ama-deus, had joined her daughter and son-in-law on their passage through Italy, added her entreaties to those of the Emperor in prevailing on Countess Mathilde to plead with Gregory for pardon and absolution.

The Pope, however, did not accede to the petition laid before him even by " the

¹ Sismondi, *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, tom. i., ch. iii., p. 122.

daughters of St. Peter," as the two Countesses were called, out of consideration for their zeal and affection for the Church. With tenacity he clung to the complete abasement of the Emperor, and to his absolute surrender of all semblance of power to the dictates of Rome. But there was nothing of the nature of pettiness or personal revenge in the Pope's attitude. Again and again Henry and his female advocates had to implore the Pope to grant them their request, reminding him also of the divine injunction that forbade the breaking of a bruised reed. Gregory, though, had his reasons for persistently refusing. He knew how a premature concession would weaken him in the eyes of the reigning powers of Italy, while his doubts as to the reality of Henry's penitence were many, and—as time was to show—were also well founded. But the suppliants, who could neither know nor guess the reasons that prompted this action, were puzzled over the Pope's obduracy; they saw only the rejection of their request; they felt only the slight put upon

them ; and in their anxiety to gain their end, they determined to press their suit still further.

At last Gregory yielded, and from the inner keep of the fortress of Canossa he sent a message consenting to admit Henry to his presence, on the understanding that he was to place within his hands the symbols of royalty, and submit in all things to the injunctions that would be laid on him. To quote from a contemporary writer : " Henry came as he was ordered, and the castle being surrounded by a threefold wall, he was admitted within the circuit of the second wall, his suite having been left outside the first circuit. He had laid aside his royal robes ; he had nothing that proclaimed him a prince, nothing wherein he displayed the slightest pomp ; his feet were bare, and he remained there fasting from morning till evening, awaiting in vain the Roman Pontiff's sentence. He awaited it again, and, in the same way, the second, and again the third day. At last, on the fourth day, he and his party were admitted into the presence of the Pope.

After long debates he was absolved from the sentence of excommunication uttered against him, on condition, however, that at a place and time appointed by the Pope he should be ready to appear before a Diet of German princes, there to answer the charges brought against him ; that the Pope should arbitrate in the cause ; and that, if Henry could prove his innocence, he should retain his throne. If, on the contrary, he could not do so, he should be punished according to ecclesiastical law.¹

The harshness of the sentence, the indignities to which Henry had been forced to submit, the picture of outraged, insulted Majesty, standing with bare feet, chill and numb, in the snow, created throughout Christendom a revulsion of feeling on which Gregory had probably not calculated. The Pope, it was felt, had acted vindictively, and had exacted terms altogether lacking in generosity ; while the Emperor's behaviour, it was said, was

¹ Lambertus, *Schafnaburgensis de Rebus gestis German.*, apud Struvium script. German., p. 420.

base and contemptible. But Henry, as the Pope had foreseen, had no intention of keeping the promises wrung from him in his misery and degradation. Hardly had he left Canossa, than he dedicated all his energies to regaining his prestige at home and avenging himself on the Pope. Wars and mutual reprisals of depositions and excommunications passed between them for the rest of their lives, filling their states with bloodshed, and reducing their subjects to misery.

But with that part of her husband's history Bertha had no share. Her life was shortened by the trials and sufferings she had undergone, and she died at Mayence, in 1088. The goal of her husband's affection was never reached. She went down to the grave realising only the emptiness of all human greatness, and its utter inadequacy to atone for the ingratitude and cruelty that had poisoned her whole existence.

The Countess Adelaide of Susa survived her daughter but a few years. She died in 1091, at Camischio, in the Province of

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Ivrea ; she was followed in succession by two of her sons, Peter I. and Amadeus II., who reigned after her as Counts of Savoy, but of whom history has nothing of special interest to relate.



SEAL OF THE EMPRESS BERTHA, WIFE
OF HENRY OF SWABIA.

CHAPTER II

1235-1270

HENRY III. OF ENGLAND AND THE HOUSE OF SAVOY. HENRY'S MARRIAGE WITH ELEANOR OF PROVENCE. WILLIAM OF SAVOY. THOMAS, COUNT OF FLANDERS. BEATRICE OF SAVOY, COUNTESS OF PROVENCE. COUNT PETER II., SURNAMED "THE LITTLE CHARLEMAGNE." BONIFACE OF SAVOY, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY ¹

EARLY in the thirteenth century, the history of Savoy became intermingled with that of England. The reign of Henry III. was marked all through its course by the influence of foreigners over the mind and action of the King, in public and in private matters. This ascendancy was largely possessed by divers members of the House of Savoy. Their presence in England served to widen the breach between the King and his subjects and to

¹ See Appendix.

fan the flame of distrust and dissatisfaction, which led finally to the War of the Barons and to the defeat at Lewes.

Henry of Winchester succeeded his father, John, in 1216, at the age of ten. As he advanced in years, he was observed to have qualities unworthy of a great prince. An extreme avarice, an astounding fickleness, great caprice in his conduct, unusual willingness to be governed by those about him, and, beyond all this, principles of tyranny, afforded a terrible prospect for the future.¹ There is much in the history of Henry's reign to justify the severity of so sweeping a condemnation. But, at the same time, it must not be forgotten that Henry, with all his faults, was a patron of artists and men of letters. His skill as a troubadour was by no means contemptible; his work as the restorer and beautifier of Westminster Abbey proclaims his artistic talent and earns for him the admiration and gratitude of posterity.

The question of a suitable marriage for the King was one that had given rise to

¹ Rapin de Thoyras, *History of England*, vol. i., p. 302.

much discussion ; but not till 1235 was the subject seriously considered. Several alliances had been proposed for King Henry : with Yolande, daughter of the Duke of Bretagne ; with a daughter of the Duke of Austria ; with a daughter of the King of Bohemia ; with a daughter of the King of Scotland ; with a daughter of the Earl of Ponthieu ; and, also, with a daughter of the Earl of Gloucester. All these plans, however, came to naught.¹

It has been alleged that Henry was actually affianced to one of these ladies (whether the Countess of Gloucester or Jeanne de Dommartin seems uncertain), when reports as to the beauty of Eleanor of Provence reached his ears and induced him to reject all the other projects in order to secure the hand of the fair Provençal.

It was not the first time that the royal house of England had contemplated an alliance with one of the descendants of Humbert of the White Hands. Henry's own father, John, had been affianced by his father, Henry II., to Alais, the eldest

¹ Rapin de Thoyras, *History of England*, vol. i., p. 305.

daughter of Humbert III., Count of Savoy. This marriage, however, never came about, owing to the death of the bride-elect. It remained for Henry of Winchester to unite in wedlock for the first time the Houses of Plantagenet and Savoy.

The brilliancy of the Court of Provence, the beauty of Countess Beatrice of Savoy, wife of the reigning Count Raymond Berenger IV., and of their four daughters, all destined to become queens, attracted every eye. Once his mind was made up, Henry lost no time in despatching envoys to demand the hand of Eleanor, or Alienor, as she is sometimes called, in marriage, although she was only twelve years old.

A favourable answer having been granted, the King deputed the Bishops of Ely and Hereford, and Robert of Sangford, Master of the Templars, to convey his affianced wife safely to England. The Princess's maternal uncle, William of Savoy, Bishop-elect of Valence in the Dauphiné, was sent by her parents to accompany the child-bride. She was also escorted by a train of horsemen and attendant squires and

men-at-arms to the number of over three hundred persons. Some time had to elapse for the bridal party to complete the journey from Provence to England, and Henry, so as to plight his troth in perfect liberty to Eleanor, took advantage of the interval to break off other engagements into which he had entered to an unwarrantable extent. The bride and her suite journeyed through France, the travellers having obtained a safe-conduct from King Louis, Queen Margaret, and the all-powerful Queen-Mother Blanche, which insured to them a "safe and honourable passage" through the land.

A quaint letter, from Queen Margaret of France to her future brother-in-law, shows, without any attempt at concealment, the anxiety of the bride's relations to hasten the marriage of the royal suitor, who certainly did not consider it his duty to strive even

"To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until he won her."

The letter ran thus: "Together with your

demand that we should accelerate the arrival of our sister, the Queen of England, we make known to Your Excellency that greatly as we rejoice in the pleasure of her company, especially under these joyful circumstances, the which, God helping us, we will moderate, in that we fear by reason of the long delay you should contract matrimony with some other lady, we will, with our power, forward this arrival. As we know that the Countess of Gloucester interests you, we shall be patient only when we learn that our sister has entered into your society.”¹

Eleanor embarked at Wissant, from whence, “the wind filling the sails, they arrived rapidly in sight of the longed-for port of Dover.” At Canterbury she met the King, who had hurried to this town to receive her, and who showed his emotion in the effusion with which he embraced the ambassadors as they arrived and filed before him. He was then presented to

¹ Champollion-Figeac, *Lettres des Rois et Reines d'Angleterre et de France*, vol. i., p. 42. This letter, according to him, is dated : “Monday, 2 October, 1235.”

his bride. Fortunately she found favour in his eyes. The marriage ceremony was performed in Canterbury Cathedral by the Archbishop and Primate of England, the saintly Edmund Rich. This took place January 12, 1236, in the presence of the bishops who had accompanied the Princess, and of a large assemblage of nobles, lords, and prelates. The royal couple proceeded at once to London, where the wedding festivities were solemnised eleven days later.

A literal translation of the account given by Matthew Paris, doubtless an eye-witness of the whole scene, will best convey the impression produced by the day's proceedings: "So great a crowd of persons, of nobles of both sexes, so large a collection of holy orders, such a host of common people, so many mummers of all kinds, had been convoked for the nuptial festival that the town of London could hardly contain them in its vast centre. The town was decked with dyed silks, banners, carpets, garlands. It shone with the light of lamps and torches. In every

street all that obstructed the traffic, in the way of mud, filth, and stumps of trees, had been removed in a manner which savoured of the miraculous.

“The Burghers of London had dressed themselves to meet their King and Queen in their gayest apparel, adorned with jewels, and causing their agile steeds to caracole in style. When they betook themselves to the town of Westminster, there to exercise their office of Cup-Bearers, an office, as it is known, that belonged of right to them at the coronation of their kings, they advanced, ranged in beautiful order, in brave apparel of silk, wrapped in mantles inwoven with gold covered with precious gems, and mounted on horses which were furnished with new saddles and new bits. They carried with them three hundred and sixty cups of gold and silver, and they were preceded by the King's trumpeters playing on their instruments, all of which formed a spectacle at once magnificent and admirable from its novelty for those who beheld it.

“The Archbishop of Canterbury, from

a right especially belonging to him, performed with much solemnity the ceremony of the coronation, assisted by the Bishop of London as Dean. The other Bishops were seated in their stalls, each one according to his rank. . . . The nobles of the realm on this occasion fulfilled the functions that they are called upon to carry out at the King's coronation in conformity with old laws and habits. In like manner the knights and the deputations of the citizens from certain towns exercised the offices appertaining to them, in accordance with rights enjoyed of old by their predecessors. The Earl of Chester bore in front of the King the sword of St. Edward, called the Curtein, in token that he is Earl of the Palace, and that he has the right and the power to reprove the King, should the King abuse his authority. His constable, that is to say, the Constable of Chester, served as his officer, and drove the people back with a wand when they pressed forward in overmuch disorder. The Grand Marshal of England, that is to say, the Earl of Pembroke,

carried the rod before the King, made way for the King, whether in church or at Court, and arranged the feast and the sitting of the guests at the royal board. The Wardens of the Cinque Ports upheld the dais over the King ; this dais was supported on four staves. The above-named Wardens were in possession of this office, not without disputings. The Earl of Leicester presented the water in the basin to the King. The Earl of Warrene exercised the office of Cup-Bearer in lieu of the Earl of Arundel, as the Earl of Arundel was still a minor, and had not as yet had the military banneret committed to him. The functions of Cup-Bearer devolved on Master Michael Behlet. The Earl of Hereford held the office of Farrier in the King's Household. William of Beauchamp held that of Almoner. The Justicier of the Forests placed the dishes on the table to the right of the King, although this privilege had, but unsuccessfully, been disputed to him at first.

“ The Burghers of London poured forth wine of a pure sort and in abundance on

all sides from vessels of priceless cost. Those of Winchester had charge of the kitchen and of the dishes. The others carried out, or claimed to carry out, the business of executing the divers charges belonging to them according to ancient decrees. Indeed, so that the nuptial rejoicings should not be overcast by the shadow of any differences, concessions as to rights had been granted for the time being, only each one had to hold to his claims and assert them at the proper moment. The duties of Chancellor of England, and all the functions which emanate from the King, were regulated and settled by the [Court of] Exchequer. Likewise the Chancellor, the Lord of the Bed-Chamber, the Marshal, the Constable, each took his place according to his office, as well as all the Barons whose creation had originally taken place in the town of London¹; by which it followed that every one had his place.

“ This ceremony consequently went off in perfect order, as much on the clerical as

¹ See Appendix.

on the knightly side. The Abbot of Westminster performed the sprinkling with the consecrated water. The Treasurer, acting for the Sub-Deacon, carried the paten. Shall I relate in detail the different services rendered by the ministers of the Church in the sight of God before Whom they are the humble servitors? Shall I describe the dishes on the table, and the copious libations of divers wines that were served? Shall I speak of the numerous plates of venison, of the variety of fish, the entertaining tricks of the jugglers, the fine presence of the officers? All that the world can offer of what is pleasant and splendid had been gathered together for that great day."¹

This "great day" was not, however, destined to yield all the happiness for the country that might have resulted from so bright an opening. The invasion, as it were, of Queen Eleanor's relatives into England, the hold they gained over the King, and the places they filled, despite the superior claims of Henry's English

¹ Matthew Paris, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 133.

subjects, were all matters fraught with injury to the country, and helped to widen the ever-growing breach between Henry and his barons.

Matthew Paris, in his antipathy to foreigners, and writing as a thorough Englishman, keen for his country's good and for the advancement of his countrymen, speaks strongly against the Counts of Savoy. He condemns, both as a patriot and a loyal subject of the King, the influence gained by these relatives of the Queen over the mind of Henry III. In no way does he soften his impeachment of their conduct and covetousness. His views, naturally, are not shared by French and Italian writers. They maintain that the Savoy princes advised the King wisely; that they discreetly withdrew from the country whenever the national susceptibility gave them reason to think that a momentary retirement would be prudent; that they accepted titles, landed possessions, and money from Henry because this was no more than their due, a just acknowledgment of their

services ; that the titles were not always borne by them, and that the King's love for his Queen made him delight in heaping riches and honours upon her relatives. Which of these two views is the right one need not here be discussed. One thing alone is certain, and that is the injury wrought to the country by the presence in England of the Savoyard princes and their attendants. "The whole machinery of administration passed into the hands of men ignorant and contemptuous of the principles of English government or English law."¹

Chief among the foreigners promoted by Henry to a position of honour was William of Savoy, one of Queen Eleanor's maternal uncles, and Bishop-elect of Valence. He had accompanied his niece, as has been said, from Provence. He probably remained at first in the capacity of tutor and guide to the young Queen, who at twelve years of age can hardly have been supposed to be sufficiently edu-

¹ J. R. Green, *A Short History of the English People*, ch. iii., p. 145, London, 1889.

cated for so exalted a position. William, who was about thirty-two years old, had been destined by his father, Count Thomas I., for the Church—a career to which the Count had dedicated indiscriminately a larger number of his sons than were afterwards found minded to accept their father's decision—and he had been named as Bishop-designate to the See of Valence, in 1225. The young ecclesiastic had shown firmness and tact when settling the dissensions consequent on the rivalries of some of his neighbours; he had successfully opposed an insurrection of his rebellious subjects at Valence; and he had also acted as arbiter among his brothers when some differences had arisen between them after their father's death. But he was pre-eminently a warrior, and his fame in this latter capacity was well established in Europe. Henry III. soon fell under the charm of this ecclesiastical Prince of Savoy; he entrusted to him the direction of his Council; riches and estates were lavished upon him, and his position seemed assured in the realm. But

his exaltation had given rise to jealousies which he quickly recognised as likely to prove his undoing. Once aware of the hatred and indignation felt towards him, he hastened to retire to his own country. Leaving in pawn to "Aaron, the Jew of York," the lands and riches that he had received in abundance from the King, and having exacted an exchange to the value of nine hundred marks sterling, "all new," of ready money, he started for Dover provided with a royal safe-conduct—a necessary precaution, seeing that he travelled with trunks filled with gold and silver and jewels, and a goodly number of pack-mules and "precious horses."

The old chronicler's comment on Prince William's departure is quaint and philosophical: "Thus by craft," he says, "the King of England had been induced to abandon the example of the magnificent Emperor and of the prudent King of France, who do not present their backs to be kicked (*Qui terga calcanda non submitunt*) by their wives, or by the relations of their wives, or by the countrymen of

[illegible]

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their wives. . . . The said William, Elect of Valence, arrived therefore in the kingdom of France, where, having greeted the King, and having visited the Queen, his sister [a mistake for niece], he received without delay his farewell audience and a safe-conduct so that he might withdraw without hurt. He then caused to be distributed and given in different places in Provence, the inestimable riches which he had brought from England on the laden horses ; then he returned to England, poor, thin, and hungry once more. The King went to meet him, threw himself upon him, embracing him heartily in transports of joy."

Henry's partiality for foreigners was not confined exclusively to the House of Savoy. He also supported his brother-in-law, Frederick II.,¹ Emperor of Germany, when in 1238 that monarch besieged Milan. Under the command of Henry de Turbeville, a company of knights, well provided with money and fully equipped,

¹ Frederick II. had married Isabella of England, Henry III.'s sister, in 1236. She died in childbirth four years after.

was despatched by royal command to assist the Emperor. The Bishop-elect of Valence, William of Savoy, "better versed in the matter of arms temporal than in that of arms spiritual," says Matthew Paris, also hurried to the scene of action, and from all sides assistance was tendered to Frederick. But in spite of being surrounded by men of valour and ability, the Emperor, to the surprise of all, frittered away his time and opportunities, and neglected to avail himself of the chances that presented themselves again and again. Only one brilliant action broke the monotony of the campaign, when the English company under Henry de Turbeville repulsed and routed the enemy, putting them to ignominious flight. The Emperor wrote to King Henry telling him of the incident, which, he added (if we are to believe the English chronicle), had saved both his life and his honour.

The Princes of Savoy espoused the Imperial cause in Italy, and the warlike Bishop William, who, as we have seen, was present at the siege of Milan, was to

be found, soon after, warring at Piacenza, where he ran no small risk of losing his episcopal life, sword in hand. His horse was killed under him, and he himself was knocked down in the fray ; but his companions, among whom was Baldwin III., Count of Guines in Flanders, raised him up, and amid cries of "Guines" and "Valence," charged the enemy afresh. This feat of arms is celebrated in the *Chronique rimée* of Archbishop Philip Monsquez, and runs as follows :

" *Gisnes* esclient et *Valence*.

Lā valu bien cel jor Valence
 Sur les Plaisentins de Plaisence
 Sous lui occisent son cheval,
 Et li eslins caī aval ;
 Mais li quens de Gisne l'en guie
 Rémonté l'a sa compagnie.
 Lā fu-il cevaliers, non clers,
 A armer tos seurs et fers
 En ans reflert, crie Valence."¹

After this encounter, William followed Frederick to Brescia. This town, having

¹ *Chronique rimée*, dans D. Bouquet, tom. xxii., p. 68.
Chronicon Placentinum, Paris, 1856, p. 174.

given assistance to the Milanese, had incurred the Emperor's wrath, and he consequently laid siege to it. The Bishop now chose this opportunity to plead with the Emperor to confirm to him his rights to the See of Valence. He dwelt on the services he had contributed to the Imperial cause, the risks he had run on Frederick's behalf. And the Emperor, recognising how much he owed to this warlike suppliant, granted his petition, and William, at last confirmed in all his rights, had occasion to bless his military prowess, which had gained for him the desired ecclesiastical ends.

This same year, Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, having died, June 9, 1238, Henry wished to appoint William of Savoy as his successor. The monks of Winchester, to whom the right of nomination belonged, had first chosen William of Rale. The King refused to sanction their choice. The same refusal awaited their next nominee, Ralph of Neville, Bishop of Chichester. The King then applied to Pope Gregory IX. to support

the nomination of William of Savoy with the force and authority of a Papal bull. The Pope saw in this request an opening which he resolved to turn to his own account. He was anxious to detach William, whose military talents were renowned, from the Imperial service and to place him at the head of his own troops. He was anxious also to conciliate the King of England and the House of Savoy; consequently, he acceded to Henry's request.

But two bishoprics were not sufficient to satisfy the cravings of the clerical warrior. He aspired to the See of Liège, a rich and powerful diocese, to which, at the moment, a protégé of the Emperor, Otho, Provost of Treves, was desirous to be appointed. William repaired to Rome, where the Pope, disregarding the fact that he already filled two episcopal thrones, solemnly proclaimed him Bishop of Liège, leaving him at the same time in full possession of the bishoprics of Valence and Winchester.

But William was not long to enjoy his

accumulation of this world's goods. Only little more than a year afterwards he fell ill at Viterbo, and died on All Saints' Day, 1239. It was supposed that death was due to poison, and an Englishman, who is spoken of only as "Master Lawrence," was accused of the crime; "but in the end he purged himself in due form." "The Pope, on hearing of this death [of William], was the more afflicted since he had intended to place him at the head of his armies in the war which he was about to wage with the Emperor. He had, withal, made him like unto a spiritual monster, and as a beast with many heads. In fact, he knew William to be a man brave in action, prompt in murder, given to conflagration. He was the councillor of the King of England, the friend of the King of France, the brother-in-law of the one and the other [mistake for uncle], the uncle of the two queens, the brother of the Count of Savoy; he was related to many other powerful men, either by alliance or by consanguinity. But this unlooked-for demise altered all the Pope's

calculations. The English King, having learnt this mournful report, could not contain his grief ; he rent his clothes and threw them into the fire ; he heaved great groanings, and would accept consolation from no man. The Queen, whose close relationship allowed of sorrow, wept also for a long time the loss of her uncle."¹

But William's death, though causing much sorrow to the King and Queen, did but make way for the appearance of others of his family on the English stage. Counts Thomas, Peter, Boniface, and Philip now became the actors in the scene, and showed in turn their talents as diplomatists and men of arms, besides being devoted adherents of their royal nephew. Their faults, however, cannot be ignored or condoned. In a country which for many years they made their home, and from which they drew unlimited wealth, they made no attempt to win the love of the inhabitants, neither did they try to conform to the ways and ideas of those among whom they lived so long. Their harsh-

¹ M. Paris, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 546.

ness, even cruelty, to their English inferiors gave unpardonable offence, especially—as will be shown—in the case of Boniface, the Prince-Archbishop of Canterbury. And their readiness to seize on the revenues of English barons and bishops and to squander these sums in their native land increased the ill-will that was felt toward them in England.

The eldest of these brothers, Thomas, known as the Count of Flanders from his marriage with Jane, daughter of Baldwin, Emperor of Constantinople, and heiress of Flanders and Hainault, soon after his marriage had concluded a commercial treaty with Henry III. In 1239 he determined to come to England and experience for himself the good-will of the King. Henry hailed his arrival with rapture, and made such demonstrations in his honour “that not knowing otherwise how to find money for this charge, he forced the Jews to provide him with twenty thousand marks on pain of being expelled the country.” The King went to meet Count Thomas at Dover; when “he evinced

more joy than was suitable . . . and ordered the inhabitants of London in all haste to sweep from the streets of their town the trunks of trees, the dung-heaps, the mud, and all the other impurities that blocked them against the day of his coming. He also desired that a deputation of burghers, dressed in their festival clothes and mounted on richly caparisoned steeds, should come forth graciously to meet the Count. In acting thus, the King excited the ridicule and contempt of many people.

“The Count on leaving England, after staying but a few days (since the King of France did not accord him a long holiday), bore with him five hundred marks which he had received from the King; he also obtained without let or hindrance an annual revenue of a like sum, which he pretended was due to him, according to an old right, from the royal exchequer as the price owed for his homage.”¹

Count Thomas visited England again a few years later with his sister, the wid-

¹ M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 537.

owed Countess of Provence, and, for the last time, in 1258. On this occasion he was borne on a litter by reason of his feeble health, having just been released from the captivity in which he had been confined by the people of Asti. His imprisonment had been long and painful, soothed only by the efforts made on his behalf by all who knew and cared for him. His brothers had all gone to his rescue and striven in one way or another to obtain his deliverance, for we read how Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his brother Philip, who were both then in England, rushed "as a rapid tempest" to his assistance, fortified with an abundance of "desirable sterlings" contributed for that object by King Henry and his consort. The Kings of England and of France had also intervened on his account. But all was in vain, and Thomas had to cede nearly all his lands and possessions before he could regain his freedom. Pope Alexander IV. sent a contribution towards the alleviation of this family disaster that was neither prac-

tical nor efficacious, a letter couched in elegant terms, and designed to comfort the anxious relatives. This letter, which Matthew Paris declares was not altogether useless, was but a hollow effusion, profuse in words of sympathy. It told how the Count's troubles were peculiarly felt by His Holiness in that the Count's person was specially dear to him, how no suffering could reach the Count but it immediately reacted on the Pope, "as by a bitter transfusion"; but beyond the assertion of these vicarious endurances no mention of help is made.

Count Thomas's health was shattered by all that he had suffered. He died the following year, 1259, at Chambéry, and was buried at Hautecombe. Matthew Paris, after dilating bitterly on the sums he had received from England and squandered in foreign countries, concludes his comments on this much-loved uncle of the King and Queen thus: "Thomas, formerly Count of Flanders, having, therefore, been poisoned, as it is rumoured, in the lands beyond the sea, he closed his eyes

upon this world for to go and gather the fruits of his doings."

The irate chronicler, whose vexation of spirit is manifest every time he speaks of the Queen's uncles, shows himself, however, in a kindlier vein towards Beatrice of Savoy, Countess of Provence, Queen Eleanor's mother, who, in the month of December, 1243, came to celebrate the marriage of her third daughter, Sanchia, with Henry's brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, afterwards King of the Romans. The extravagance of Henry and the condition of the London streets again attract Matthew Paris's attention, and if the highways were indeed in the state he describes, surely these constant visits of foreign princes, followed by constant cleansings of the thoroughfares of the English metropolis, must have availed, if nothing else, at least in producing a certain amount of cleanliness !

The Countess of Provence, accordingly, landed at Dover, "at the bidding and invitation of the King, who defrayed all the costs of her journey. Her bearing

was gracious ; she was also endowed with marked tact and affability. She arrived with a great following and with much pomp and display. A large number of English lords from all parts of England, even from the farthest north, compelled by the King's decree, went to meet her. And, to do her honour, her royal son-in-law desired that the town of London should be decorated for her reception with curtains, carpets, and such like adornments, from the Bridge to Westminster ; and that all things that might hinder her passage, such as the trunks of trees, mud, and other offensive and unclean objects, might be removed from sight."¹

The Countess Beatrice was an unrivalled match-maker in securing royal husbands for all of her daughters. The eldest had been married at the age of twelve years to Louis IX. of France ; the second at the same age to Henry III. of England ; the third was now to marry Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1257, at Aix-la-Cha-

¹ M. Paris, vol. v., p. 354.

pelle; and the youngest, Beatrice, was ere long to wed Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX., who eventually became King of Naples. These royal alliances are alluded to in the *Paradiso* by Dante, where he says: "Four daughters had he, and each one a queen, Ramondo Berlinghieri." (*Quattro figlie ebbe, e ciascuna reina, Ramondo Berlinghieri.*)¹

The Earl of Cornwall, later to be known as King of the Romans, was married to Sanchia of Provence in Westminster Abbey amid great splendour and expenditure. "To say much in few words, more than thirty thousand dishes were prepared in the kitchens for the guests." The King, the Queen, the Countess of Provence, and a "brave galaxy of lords and ladies took part in the nuptial feast, when the bride's name was changed to Scientia."² The excess of mirth and revelry aroused the disdain of the old chronicler, who says: "The various tricks of the jugglers, the brilliant diversity of the dresses, the

¹ *Paradiso*, canto vi., 133.

² See Appendix.

abundance of the dishes, the splendid crowds of guests, left nothing wanting to this secular pomp and this vainglory, of which the passing and despicable delights proved but too clearly the vanity of this world, where nothing is but shadow and illusion, since the day after to-morrow this varied and ostentatious display was to be dissipated as a breath of wind dissipates a cloud in the heavens."

The joy was indeed about to be overcast, for already the news of the fatal illness of the Count of Provence was on its way to England. The Countess had gone to London accompanied by King Henry and a noble train of courtiers to keep the Feast of the Circumcision, and, the festival over, she prepared to return home, being escorted by the King and many others to Dover. Here she was met by the tidings of her husband's hopeless condition, and the grief excited in Henry's breast was so great that he was seized with a mighty sorrow, and he offered many prayers and alms for Count Raymond's recovery.

As has been mentioned, the Countess came again to England in 1248, when as a widow and accompanied by her brother Thomas, Count of Flanders, she came on the plea of seeing her friends and relations. But Matthew Paris assigns a different reason ; he knows better than to be deceived, and declares that it was "to drink at a source of whose abundance they were all-knowing, and to fill at their departure their gaping and empty coffers, thanks to the generosity and prodigality of the King."¹

There were two more of these princes of Savoy who exercised still greater influence over Henry of Winchester, and who, through his partiality and foolishness, attained to positions in England for which their nationality and education made them totally unfitted. The first of these was Peter II. of Savoy, known in history as the "Little Charlemagne," and unquestionably the greatest of all the sons of Count Thomas I. ; the other was Boniface, who became Archbishop of Canterbury.

¹ M. Paris, vol. vi., p. 354.

The first mention of Peter of Savoy in England is in 1241, but he had probably visited the country several times already, for Matthew Paris says that "the Count had experienced that England was good for him." This conviction would be confirmed by the reception given him by his royal nephew, for Henry went to meet him, welcomed him with a delight not to be repressed, referred to him for advice, and placed himself and all that he had implicitly in his hands. Still further honours awaited Count Peter. Henry named him President of the King's Privy Council; he also conferred on him the earldom of Richmond; he presented to him a palace on the Thames, which took from him its name of "Savoy House"¹; and on the Eve of St. Edmund's Day (January 5, 1241), he dubbed him knight in Westminster Abbey, together with fifteen young noblemen. The Burghers of London were forced by a royal edict to attend, as on former occasions, under pain

¹ It was demolished in 1816 to make way for Waterloo Bridge.

of a heavy fine; all the mayors of the different towns, we read, were present in their festival robes, as though it had been a wedding-day, and the whole ceremony was followed by a "copious and splendid" repast in the King's palace. These distinctions were succeeded by others of a more remunerative nature in the shape of lands and lordships in no less than six different counties in England,¹ amounting, it has been computed in all, to no less than three hundred and twenty feudatories. The King seemed to delight in sowing the seeds of discontent among his own subjects by his prodigality and partiality to those of another nation.

In this same year (1241), the "Earl of Richmond," as Matthew calls Count Peter (though his foreign biographers deny his ever having borne that title), instituted a tourney to be held at Northampton. A love of tournaments and all knightly exercises was an ingrained passion in the members of the House of Savoy, and Peter

¹ York, Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, and Hereford.

II. was a true representative of his race. Inaugurated from a genuine love of the "play of lances," and from a desire on Peter's part to see who were the better men, his followers or the English, the joust was to be to the "bitter end." King Henry, however, from a mistaken sense of hospitality, was anxious that the Savoyards should prove successful and carry off the palm from his own subjects. For this purpose he "corrupted the hearts of the nobles," and by threats and bribes he prevailed on the English competitors to allow themselves to be defeated by the Count and his knights. Some foreign writers affirm that the fight took place, and that the cavaliers of Savoy were victorious over the most renowned champions of England. But such was not the case. As the time for the tournament drew nigh, and the number and strength of the foreigners waxed ever greater (and with that, no doubt, their insolence and swagger, to boot), Henry's better judgment returned to him. "He repented of his desire that aliens should prevail against

his own subjects," and, though all was fixed for the tourney and the lists were about to be entered, he despatched Brother John, his almoner and a Knight Templar, charged with letters, and in all haste, to forbid the fight.

No sooner had this open competition been prevented, than another trial of strength of a different nature was set on foot, not so easily to be set aside. The estimation in which Count Peter was held by the English monarch, the favours showered upon him, and his unbounded influence over Henry, had raised against him a host of enemies. They now clamoured for his downfall and conspired to remove him from his position beside the King. The secrecy of the plot, however, was not so well kept but that Peter became aware of it. He determined thereupon to forestall his adversaries and take matters into his own hands. He resolved not only to leave England at once, but also to relinquish—or, at least, to make a show of relinquishing—the estates so lavishly bestowed on him by his nephew. He ac-

cordingly placed them and the numerous offices he had received from Henry in his hands, and set off for Dover. "Such moderation and prudence gained for him the hearts of many." But Henry would not consent to these measures. He prevented the Count's departure, and compelled him to stay and, at all events, to retain the post of Warden of Dover Castle.

Peter's life after this was one of continual activity. He was from time to time in Savoy, Switzerland, France, and England, appointing laws for his own people, gaining the hearts of the hardy mountaineers in the northernmost division of his dominion, endeavouring, though unsuccessfully, to smooth matters between the royal brothers-in-law of France and England, and striving, though equally unsuccessfully, to adjust the differences that were but increasing every year between Henry III. and the Barons of England.

The crusade that Henry III. wished to undertake in 1256 to the Holy Land was to a large extent under the direction of Peter, though the commander-in-chief

was to have been his elder brother, Thomas, Count of Flanders. Upon Thomas, in anticipation of the deeds of prowess that would surely be done by him, the principedom of Capua was conferred. But the rising of the Barons in 1258 under Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, banished all idea of a holy war. A few years after, when the battle of Lewes had resulted in victory for the rebels and imprisonment for Henry, Peter joined his niece, Queen Eleanor, in her efforts to raise soldiers in France. He sailed in command of the forces which they had collected, but a storm dispersed the fleet, and Peter, having done his utmost to raise money enough to enable Prince Edward to hasten to the rescue of the King, retired to his own dominions. Though Peter's talents for wisdom and administration are recognised and admitted by English writers, they reproach him, among other things, for the way in which he provided for some young Savoyard nobles, placed by the state under his guardianship, by marrying them to rich Eng-

lish heiresses, and thus causing English gold to pass irrevocably out of the country.

In 1263, Peter succeeded his nephew Boniface, the son of Amadeus IV., as reigning Count of Savoy. According to the right of primogeniture, the sons of Thomas II., Count of Flanders, should have succeeded their cousin, but they were still in tender years, and, as has been noticed elsewhere, the right of the "fittest" prevailed in Savoy over that of the eldest born. Peter II. therefore reigned by that right, as well as from the conviction that he was the only ruler capable at such a moment of guiding the affairs of state. Soon after his accession, he was invested by his brother-in-law, Richard of Cornwall (who in 1256 had been elected King of the Romans), with the rank of Imperial Vicar. It is said that when the ceremony was held for conferring on him this dignity, Peter appeared dressed in garments partly of gold, partly of iron. On being questioned as to the meaning of this apparel, he replied that he intended with the gold to do honour to the Imperial Majesty,

with the iron to uphold his own. And he returned again to the charge when, being asked by the Imperial Chancellor to show the title whereby he held his nomination, he drew his sword from its scabbard, exclaiming as he flashed the naked steel before the eyes of his questioner, "Here is my title."

The life of agitation, movement, and excitement through which Peter had passed told at last on his constitution. On May 7, 1268, we read of him as "healthy in mind though sick in body," about to make a new will, and preparing for his end. He summoned to his bedside his favourite brother, Philip, soon to succeed him as Count of Savoy, and to him he bequeathed most of his property. All his English estates he left to his niece, Queen Eleanor; and numerous other bequests were also added to friends, relations, and pious institutions, together with an urgent entreaty, or rather command, that, before any legacies were paid, his debts should all be discharged. It is a curious feature in the history of all the sons of Thomas I. that,

in spite of the family quarrels which arose over their father's will, their family affection was deep and strong. If one of them suffered injury or defeat from his enemy, the rest of the brothers flew at once to his rescue. Their carefulness in arranging their affairs, the exactitude as to their wills, their solicitude in providing for their families, and their earnest exhortations as to the payment of their debts ought to acquit them of much of the reproach of covetousness and love of gain often laid at their door.

According to one account, Peter of Savoy passed his last days at Chillon, in the beautiful castle he loved so well. At times, he was wont to sail on the lake which "lies by Chillon's walls," accompanied by "the troubadour knight, de Ferrato." The minstrel, to soothe his master's sufferings, sang to him of "the brilliant actions in which this illustrious prince had borne so noble a part." But a more reliable authority speaks of his death at Pierre-Châtel in the province of the Lesser Bugey in 1268, aged sixty-five, and of his burial

at Hautecombe. The Latin chronicle of Savoy says of him that "he was a man prudent, proud, bold and terrible as a lion; in his day he subdued many, hence his surname of the 'Little Charlemagne.'" He left a fairer record than this, in the hearts of his people, whose love and admiration for him knew no bounds, and whose descendants to this day cherish and revere the name and memory of Count Peter II.

Peter was succeeded by Philip, who is described¹ as a "member of that famous dynasty of Savoy, who from that moment [*i. e.*, when he was nominated Archbishop of Lyons] joined to his cupidity a policy stripped of all scrupulousness; brother of the Count Amadeus IV., of Thomas, Count of Flanders, of the famous Peter of Savoy, of the no less famous Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, of the Countesses Beatrice of Provence and Margaret of Kyburg, he was as grasping, as intriguing, and almost as powerful as

¹ Berger, Élie, Introduction du tome ii. des *Registres d'Innocent IV.*, p. lxix., et suivantes.



CASTLE OF CHILLON.



his brothers." This judgment passed on Philip of Savoy and on his brothers is a harsh one, and not altogether fair when we consider the times in which these men lived. As rulers and statesmen these princes of Savoy are worthy of much praise. Their administration in their own states was wise and enlightened; and though they did not rise above their contemporaries in their dealings they did not fall below them. They were unstained by the cruelties and excesses resorted to by most of their neighbours in their methods of obtaining money.

But the most outrageous example of the partiality of the English King for Savoy appears in the case of Boniface, the seventh son of Count Thomas I. This prince, from his great personal beauty, was distinguished by the name of "Absalom" in his own country. He had been destined, together with several of his brothers, for the Church. It was felt, perhaps, that the inheritance he would derive from his father would be too meagre to supply his needs and ambitions, and that he must look to

Mother Church to make good the shortcomings of Father Thomas. And this end would be easily attainable through the instrumentality of the King of England. Henry had lavished only secular benefits and riches so far on his foreign relations; the Church was an unexplored treasure-house and could surely be turned to in meeting the requirements of one who had assumed her garb. So the Church in England was to pour forth her wealth upon this young and handsome Savoyard, and provide for an alien the highest post she possessed, a dignity which, until then, she had generally bestowed upon her own sons.

The death of Archbishop Edmund Rich in 1241 left the See of Canterbury vacant. King Henry, unable himself to name the successor, made no secret as to whom he wished to have appointed to the primacy. The monks of Canterbury, with whom rested the power of nomination, knew well the royal wishes; they knew that to second those wishes would insure for them an amount of kingly favour and patronage

not otherwise obtainable. "To show themselves agreeable to the King, considering, too, that the Pope and Henry rendered each other mutually many good offices, and that Boniface was uncle to the Queen, the monks selected him as Archbishop, although they knew nothing as to his learning, nor as to his habits, and were even ignorant as to his age."¹ The actual appointment, taking place in 1241, did not receive the Pope's ratification till two years after, September 14, 1243.

That Boniface was not unworthy, on occasions, of his high office was shown, soon after his nomination, by his conduct with regard to William of Rale, Bishop of Winchester. This dignitary from having been high in the King's favour had fallen into disgrace and had been treated with marked displeasure and disdain by Henry. Boniface wrote kindly to the fallen prelate and firmly to the King, insisting that the Bishop, who had done nothing to incur the royal displeasure, should be restored to favour. Henry, always amenable to

¹ M. Paris, vol. v., p. 156.

the wishes of his wife's relations, complied with Boniface's suggestions.

In the year 1245, Boniface was consecrated by Pope Innocent IV. to the archbishopric of Canterbury. The ceremony took place at Lyons. At the same time, Boniface's younger brother, Philip, was made Archbishop of Lyons. Boniface was already "Procurator" of the church of Belley at the time of his elevation to Canterbury, but he had not even the rank of a deacon, and the delay between his nomination and installation may have been due to his low grade in the clerical ranks. The fact that the Papal throne was at that moment untenanted may also explain this delay, which Boniface does not seem to have turned to account in preparing himself for the duties awaiting him in his new career. That he ever would rise to the height of his responsibilities as Primate of England was hardly to be expected when we realise the character of the man. His description is given by that shrewd chronicler of the time, the old monk of St. Albans. "Boniface," he says,

“was a Provençal by nationality, more illustrious by his birth than by his learning, and more formidable in arms temporal than in arms spiritual. It was owing to the efforts of the King of England and of the Queen, his niece, that he was exalted to this dignity : God grant no one may have to repent thereof.”¹

The gloomy forebodings of Matthew Paris were fulfilled in 1250, when Boniface, anxious to emulate the Bishop of Lincoln, and to exercise the right of visitation in his diocese, announced his intention to put this right into practice. As yet he had not been empowered by the Pope to do so. He began this visitation with a visit of inspection to the Chapter of Canterbury, and executed it with such rigour that all quailed and gave way before him. From thence he proceeded to Feversham, where out of pusillanimity the monks dared not oppose his visitation. His next move was to Rochester, where with much turbulence he extorted more than thirty marks from that very poor community. These visita-

¹ M. Paris, vol. vi., p. 56.

tions had for their purpose the exaction of money more than any desire for the spiritual welfare of his flock.

But the scene of his chief excesses was in London, where, instead of lodging in his own palace at Lambeth, he installed himself in the splendid residence of the Bishop of Chichester. The violence of his servitors, in immediately swooping down on the markets and obtaining by threats and rough usage all that their master could desire, was hardly in keeping with the dignity and position of a Prince of the Church. That the Primate himself did not disdain to cater in person was evident from the visit paid by him, the day following his arrival at Lambeth, to Fulk, Bishop of London,¹ when he displayed most unseemly manners. He insisted, not only that he should be supplied with all that was necessary both for food and drink, but also that his horses' shoes, which had come off on the journey, should be renewed

¹ Fulk Basset had been Dean of York, and was elected against the wish and intention of the King as Bishop of London in 1241.

at the Bishop's expense. "More of his behaviour to the same Bishop cannot be repeated: it would be an offence to the minds and ears of the hearers, beside piercing their hearts with anguish."

But Boniface had not yet reached the full measure of his iniquity. The day after he had looked in on the Bishop of London, he announced his intention to visit the Priory of St. Bartholomew-by-Smithfield. His conduct there, as described by an eye-witness, gives a startling picture of men and manners in those days. The account must doubtless be received with caution, for the writer's prejudice against Boniface is so great as to distort his judgment, and his description is highly coloured.¹ An endeavour made by the young Primate to visit the Chapter of St. Paul's had met with such determined opposition on the part of the Canons that Boniface had to withdraw, foiled in his purpose, and able only to revenge himself by calling down excommunications upon the Dean and Chapter. Resolved to have his way

¹ See Appendix.

in spite of all opposition, he issued forth for a visitation to the Priory of St. Bartholomew, bristling with rage, and armed with a cuirass under his ecclesiastical vestments. The Prior was absent, but he was met and received by the Sub-Prior and accompanied to the monastery, preceded by a procession of the brothers bearing numerous torches and candles to mark the solemnity of the occasion ; the bells, meanwhile, pealed out their welcome. The Canons were dressed in their most richly embroidered robes, though that of the Sub-Prior surpassed all the others in its splendour and costliness. All these tokens of reverence, however, received but little attention from the Archbishop, who merely said that he had come to the Priory to visit the Canons. These dignitaries were all assembled in the Choir, and amongst them Boniface soon took his place, being followed by several of his own retainers, whose deportment was far from being in keeping with their sacred surroundings. The proceedings were not destined to advance as calmly as they had begun.

One of the Canons, little aware of the character of the man with whom he had to do, thought to put a stop to this inspection and to cut short an honour as unsolicited as it was unnecessary. He informed Boniface that they were already possessed of a Bishop, clever and efficient, whose office it was to visit them, and that they were not at liberty nor anxious to receive the visitations of any other, save of him alone.

Upon this, the Archbishop's rage knew no bounds. He threw himself upon the Sub-Prior, and, oblivious equally of the sanctity of the place and of the holiness of his office, he struck the aged Priest with his fist, hitting him on the chest, on his face, and on his head, exclaiming at the top of his voice: "It is thus, it is thus, that one must treat these English traitors!" Then in a burst of ungovernable fury and with a string of oaths he called for his sword.

The tumult waxed ever greater; the Canons rushed to the rescue of their Sub-Prior, and endeavoured in vain to save him from the hands of so apparent a

maniac. Boniface siezed the cope wherein the Sub-Prior was dressed, and tore the clasp ("commonly called the bit") so violently that this magnificent vestment, adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones, was trodden under foot by the jostling crowd and hopelessly ruined. "This splendid cope was thus damaged beyond repair; but the fury of the Archbishop was not appeased." Pushing the saintly man from him with violence, he forced the Sub-Prior backwards so rudely that his body was wedged between the bars of wood which supported the stalls, breaking his bones in such a manner as to cause the marrow to ooze from them, and even smashing in the breast-bone.

The sight of this fiendish assault inflamed the onlookers. They hastened to carry off the fainting form of the Sub-Prior, and to repulse his assailant. Boniface was knocked down, disclosing in his fall the cuirass which he wore beneath his ecclesiastical robes. The horror produced by such a sight was too great for words. Conjectures at once arose that

the Primate had come with the intention of causing a brawl, without any pious object as to monks, Canons, or Chapter in his mind. The fray thereupon became general. The Archbishop's retinue, seeing their pugnacious master dealing blows and cuffs in every direction, followed his example, and laid about them on the unarmed and defenceless crowd in a fashion suggestive of neither chivalry nor godliness.

The Canons, pale, bruised, and bleeding, with torn vestments, betook themselves on foot to their Bishop and implored him, weeping, for redress and protection against so malignant a foe.

"The King is at Westminster," was the reply; "go and find him; show yourselves to him in that state; peradventure he may be indignant at so criminal and open a violation of the peace in his own capital." But the Canons were so hurt and knocked about that only four of them could walk to Westminster to present their appeal to the King. They traversed the city, arousing the pity of the towns-

folk by showing them their wounds with the blood running from them. Their pallor, their bruises, their torn garments, excited in every mind a just indignation at such a deed, mingled with sympathy for their sufferings. The Sub-Prior, moaning heavily, had been carried to the infirmary and put to bed, but his injuries were such that he never recovered.

But the King refused to see the suppliants, nor would he listen to their complaints, though they waited long at the very door of his chamber. No choice remained to them but to return to their church, desecrated as it was by the scenes of rioting and bloodshed which, thanks to His Grace the Archbishop, had taken place within its walls.

The report of these doings awoke the resentment of the citizens of London. They proposed to sound the alarm, "To Arms!" and to hew the Archbishop to pieces. Outcries and threats flew plentifully about. When their passions were thoroughly worked up to fever heat, the mob adjourned to Lambeth to wreak their

vengeance on the culprit. "Where is this rioter, this impious murderer, this man of blood, who, far from winning souls, thinks only of stealing money? It is not by a free and lawful election; it is not by the hand of God that he has been raised to this post; he is an intruder whom the King has thrust illegally upon us, ignorant and married as he is. Behold him now, having polluted with his iniquity the whole of our town!"

The Archbishop, fearful of being surprised by the mob, stole across the river and appealed to the King, complaining bitterly of the accusations laid against him, which he maintained were unjust. He also laid his case before Queen Eleanor, forcibly claiming to be exonerated. The King, fearing some open sedition on the part of his subjects, forbade all, high or low, from meddling in the matter, on peril of their lives. He extended his royal protection to Boniface. The Archbishop, seeing that he might still count on his nephew's support, uttered excommunications against the leading

churches of London and their Chapters, and from his chapel at Lambeth he invoked the thunders of the Church against all whom he considered to be partisans of the Priory of St. Bartholomew.

Both sides contemplated laying the matter before the Pope and referring to him for vengeance and justification. This resolve was not put into execution, but in September of that same year (1250) a Papal bull decreed that Boniface's excommunications were invalid. The monks, consequently, may be congratulated on having worsted the Archbishop. Boniface, however, continued none the less to affirm his right as to these visitations, though a letter he received two months afterwards from Hugh, the General of the Carthusians, had evidently its effect in persuading him that he must not carry matters with too high a hand, and that submission and humility would not misbecome even so exalted a personage as himself. In this letter the Father Superior calls to mind how, when the young prince departed in tears from the "Chartreuse

des Portes," where he had laid such strong foundations of virtue, he had left to him, the humble Procurator of the convent, a book by St. Gregory entitled *Moralium*. He prayed that Boniface would imitate the virtues of St. Edward, whose miracles, together with those of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, he had ever before his eyes. He reminded him how these had exchanged pride for humility, luxury for frugality, riches for poverty, besides always preserving intact their profession as Carthusians. "Hold fast likewise," he added, "the remembrance of your profession ; yours is not forgotten among us."

At the same time that this letter was received by Boniface, disquieting rumours were spreading throughout the country as to the nature of the Primate's visitations ; and alarmed as to the turn public opinion was taking, he judged it prudent to make overtures to conciliate the Canons of St. Bartholomew. He secretly sent messengers to soothe the ruffled feelings of the brotherhood and to silence their clamours by gifts and promises (the latter largely

interspersed with threats). The poor monks, as Boniface was rich as well as powerful, saw fit to be patient and commend their cause to God and to the Blessed Bartholomew.

The Archbishop, who can scarcely be called a victor in the fight, learned a lesson, however, and did not again so aggressively exert his arms temporal. In 1253, after assisting at the funeral of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, he applied for hospitality at the Abbey of St. Albans. His request now was couched in the most humble terms, and though every sort of civility was proffered to His Grace, he would accept only the barest necessities. He departed after one night's lodging, without even entering into the cloister or the church, thanking the brothers in the most civil and grateful manner for all they had done for him.

Boniface was not often to be found as a suppliant; nor did he assume that character of a pastor careful to ingratiate himself with the flock over whom he had been set as spiritual overseer which might have

won him the hearts of many. In 1256 he so oppressed the Bishop of Rochester, that that prelate appealed, weeping, to the King for justice against the Primate. But Henry was unable to call his clerical uncle to order, and confessed as much, when with bent head he replied : “ I cannot bend him either to justice or to humility ; and I must needs be wary of offending or demeaning a man so illustrious by his birth, and of so powerful a family ; nor, above all, must the Queen be vexed in the matter.”

But there was a pleasanter side to the “ Handsome Archbishop,” as Boniface was called in his own country ; and that was his love for that country and all connected with it. His sojourn in a foreign land never made him forgetful of his friends and relatives in Savoy. His thoughtfulness for all who were dear to him is manifest in the legacies made in his will. This document, which bears date October 11, 1264, directs first that he shall be buried at Canterbury, should he die at sea or in England ; at Pontigny, should he die be-

tween that spot and the sea ; at Haute-combe, should he die between Pontigny and the Mont Cenis ; and at St. Michel-de-la-Chiusa, should he die beyond the Alps. Many bequests are made to churches, religious houses, and pious institutions ; he leaves "souvenirs" to his sisters ; 100 marks to the King of England wherewith to buy himself jewels ; his brother Philip and his nephews are all remembered and mentioned ; but the largest legacy in money is a sum of 500 marks which he leaves to the hospital founded by him at Maidstone. This hospital was evidently his hobby ; and we find him returning to England the following year, soon after the victory of Evesham (1265), to resume his duties as Primate, and "to pursue the great works he had undertaken in his archiepiscopal palace, and at the hospital at Maidstone."¹

This time he stayed in England only a few months, returning to Savoy in October of that year ; he was again in England in

¹ Mugnier, François, *Les Savoyards en Angleterre au xiiième Siècle*, Chambéry, 1890.



VIEW OF THE ABBEY CHURCH OF ST. MICHEL-DE-LA-CHIUUSA, ONE OF THE BURIAL-PLACES OF THE HOUSE OF SAVOY.

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1266, and back once more in Savoy the end of that same year. In 1268 he prepared to leave England for the Continent (*ad partes transmarinas*), little thinking that he was about to cross the narrow stream of death. This was his last journey. Worn by an incurable illness, he died on July 14, 1270, at the Castle of Ste. Hélène-des-Millières, and was buried at Hautecombe, according to the wish in his will.

Though the foregoing sketch of Boniface may lead to the passing of a harsh judgment upon him, that judgment must be tempered with mercy. That he was eminently unfitted for the post which he was called to fill was perhaps more his misfortune than his fault. The age in which he lived must also be considered, as well as his lack of sufficient education for the vocation that fell to his lot, together with his strongly marked tastes and capabilities for a warlike rather than a clerical career.

His generosity with regard to any charity connected with his diocese was great. An inimical chronicler admits that he did

three memorable things : " He paid a debt of forty thousand marks, contracted by his predecessors ; he built and endowed the vast hospital of Maidstone ; and he completed at a great outlay the magnificent hall in the archiepiscopal palace of Canterbury, begun in the time of Hubert."

That this hall was not built by Boniface is well known. But it may, in a certain sense, be ascribed to him, since, having wiped off the debts contracted by other archbishops for its building, he may surely be said to share in the work of its erection. And this he was wont playfully to assert, when, pacing the hall with his more intimate friends, he would remark : " By Christ, my predecessors erected this hall at a vast expense, but they only did it by the help of borrowed sums ; methinks, since I have paid their debts, I may say that I have built this hall."¹

It is also recorded of Boniface that he loved the poor, and that a large sum of money, put aside by him to build an altar in the nave of a church, was, by his desire,

¹ See Appendix.

divided among the poor when he felt the approach of death, and realised that he could not live to carry out the intended work.

A Papal decree has enrolled Boniface in the category of the Beatified, and the 30th of June is the day set apart for the festival of one who, in spite of all his weaknesses and shortcomings, has not been judged unworthy by the Church to take his place among the ranks of the Blessed.¹

¹ See Appendix.



SEAL OF COUNT PHILIP I. OF SAVOY.

CHAPTER III

1334-1382

AMADEUS VI., THE "CONTE VERDE," KNIGHT AND CRUSADER ¹

THE characteristics and doings of Amadeus VI. are so many and so varied in their different degrees that it is difficult to decide on which of them to dwell.

Amadeus was above all else a born ruler and administrator. His care for his people, his love of justice and order, his skill and valour as a general,—all combine to place him among the greatest of the Princes of Savoy. Although he chose for his motto the words "J'astans mon astre," there was nothing of the fatalist or the sluggard in any of his actions ; the promptness he shewed on every great emergency proves him to have been a man of energy and decision.

This was especially the case when

¹ See Appendix.



1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them.

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them.

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CHAPTER III

1334-1382

AMADEUS VI., THE "CÔTE VERDE," KNIGHT AND CRUSADER¹

THE characteristics and doings of Amadeus VI. are so many and so varied in their different degrees that it is difficult to decide on which of them to dwell.

Amadeus was above all else a born ruler and administrator. His care for his people, his love of justice and order, his skill and valour as a general,—all combine to place him among the greatest of the Princes of Savoy. Although he chose for his motto the words "*J'aime mon astre*," there was nothing of the fatalist or the fortune-teller in any of his actions; the promptness he shewed on every great emergency proves him to have been a man of energy and decision.

This was especially the case when

¹ See Appendix.



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France stepped by inheritance into Dauphiné, and Amadeus had to settle in what spirit he would encounter his new neighbour. The Dauphins of that province had for many years molested the lands of Savoy. But the trial of strength between the two foes had been equal and well maintained, and neither side possessed that excess of wealth or arms which might have made the struggle uneven. The last Dauphin, leaving no heir to succeed him, bequeathed his lands to the Crown of France. Amadeus saw himself suddenly called upon to measure forces with a foe of incalculably greater power and resources than his own. He perceived at once the folly of carrying on a struggle with one who could crush him in a moment, and so he wisely desisted from a strife that could end only in his annihilation. He therefore concentrated his energies in developing the resources of his country towards Italy, and in opening out his powers on a side where no opposition or impediment threatened him.

His talents, too, as an arbitrator gained

him undying renown. After the war of Chioggia, when a mediator was needed to arbitrate between Venice and Genoa, the Count of Savoy undertook to act in that capacity. By his wisdom and tact he restored peace to the two great naval republics. But it is in his character as "a knight and a warrior bold" that Amadeus VI. appeals most strongly to the imagination. And the task of studying him in that aspect is the one that proves most seductive, whether it be as a crusader, when he rescued his cousin, the Emperor of Constantinople, from an undeserved prison, or as a knight, when he contended in the lists, horse and rider alike decked in the colour that obtained for him the surname by which he is best known to posterity.

Amadeus's father, Count Aimon, had died when his son was but nine years of age. The young Count's minority was watched over by men selected by Aimon with care and forethought for the task. When Amadeus took the reins of office into his own hands, the sagacity and wis-

dom of their rule had already brought to prosperity the state committed to their charge.

His love of arms was evident at a very early age. When but twelve years old he took part in a war waged by his guardians against the Marquises of Saluces and Montferrat. He was present during a hard-fought battle against the people of Montferrat when the Savoyard arms were victorious. It was to celebrate his return from this campaign, after two years' absence, that Amadeus VI., at the age of fourteen, proclaimed a tournament at Chambéry, to which, in the year 1349, he summoned high and low to attend from far and near, and to join in the knightly exercises that were the delight of this young Count of Savoy.

The invitation met with a hearty response. Competitors came from all lands, and all prepared to join in the tourney and to win lasting renown from so brilliant a spectacle. The contest was to last three days ; twenty-four knights, twelve on each side, were to contend for the mastery.

To the knight who should prove himself the bravest and ablest was to be awarded a prize, consisting of a kiss and a rod from each of four ladies. The rod was to remind him that love must be checked and set in order. It was made of gold, and was given by each lady after the sweeter half of the reward had been bestowed. There was to be no diversity as to the prizes: every one shared alike, and as on the first, so on the two following days, the kiss and the gold rod from each of the four "high dames" awaited the lucky victor.

On the first day of May the tournament began. Count Amadeus and his eleven companions entered the lists all clothed in dark green, their horses caparisoned in the same colour; their arms and accoutrements, their bridles, the feathers on their crests, their helmets, the points of their lances were all ornamented in dark green. All these knights were accompanied into the lists by twelve ladies, also dressed entirely in green, each one leading her champion's horse with a leading-rein of green silk.

Twelve other warriors came to encounter this phalanx of green-clad men-at-arms, all of them of high lineage, and all in such gaudy apparel and mounted on such gallant steeds that "better it could not be." The combatants having entered the lists, the ladies set free their knights, and withdrew immediately to the platform above, where they could behold the strife, which then began in sober earnest.

"Hard and proud" was the struggle, lasting even until after nightfall, so that the fight had to be continued by torchlight, and many were the torches lit and consumed ere it was ended. A cessation of arms having at last been sounded, the ladies led away their warriors, and conducted them in safety to the castle, where they doffed their armour. After supper had been served to all, an elaborate entertainment was provided, consisting of sackbuts, trumpets, and all kinds of music and minstrelsy for the delectation of the guests. This was again followed by a banquet, when the four ladies who were to recompense the victor came forward, each one

bearing a gold rod in her hand, "and one after the other kissed Messire Anthoyne de Gramont as he who had done the best on that day, and then each one gave him a gold rod as his prize." The gentleman in question was much overcome by these honours and favours; he was shy and bewildered, and blushed deeply while tendering his thanks to the fair ladies for their amiability. A fresh outburst of music, bidding all to prepare for the dance, cut short his confusion and his gratitude. He was privileged to tread the measure with the lady of highest degree among the four who had conferred on him his rewards. The revels began. Dancing, masquerades, and mummeries kept the company merry till after midnight. That hour was looked upon as uncommonly late by the good chroniclers of those days.

The next day the same order of things was observed exactly, from the leading in of the knights by their dames (though it must be noted that the green silk leading-reins used on the occasion were new ones) to the winding up of the fray by torchlight.

The prize of kisses and gold rods was adjudged this time to Messire Peter, Count of Arberg, who does not appear to have suffered from the shyness and embarrassment that had afflicted Monsieur de Gramont on the previous day. As before, the festivities were brought to a close with music and masquerades.

The third day the tournament began earlier in the morning, but the same regulations held good, and the ladies, dressed in green, led in their verdant knights as on the former occasions. The combat was kept up for the whole day. Some knights of Burgundy "comported themselves right grandly and well," and at the conclusion of the day's proceedings "Messire Chie-baut, Comte de Neufchastel," carried off the prize of the four kisses and the four gold rods.

But the twelve ladies who had taken part in the tourney were anxious to signify to the young Count of Savoy their appreciation of his prowess as a knight and of his courtesy as their host. Amid the sound of many instruments they advanced

towards him, each with a gold rod in her hand, and addressed him thus: "Monseigneur, without any flattery you have shewn yourself as the bravest knight in the lists, and for that we assign this prize to you." The Count thanked them graciously, and admitted that he would gladly receive the kisses, which were then and there promptly bestowed. But he refused the gifts of the rods, entreating the fair dames to bestow them on the Lords of Villars, of Entremons, and of Corgeron, who, he declared, were more worthy to receive them than he. After some consultation together the ladies professed their readiness to present the rods to the three knights named, but they agreed to withhold the kisses. This coyness on the part of the ladies caused much discontent to these gentlemen. They occasioned great merriment by presenting themselves before Count Amadeus, complaining that he had kept for himself the sweet part of the reward, and had left the chastening for them, whereas, far more ardently had they desired the "baisiers" from the ladies

than any number of rods, even were they of the finest gold. As to whether the kisses were vouchsafed or not is not related, but we are told that the feast was recommenced amid renewed joy.

From that day Amadeus VI. of Savoy was known by the name of "Il Conte Verde,"—"the Green Count."

Having seen how Amadeus VI. acquitted himself as a knight, we must now consider him as a Crusader, when in later years he devoted himself to the fulfilment of a promise, made perhaps in a moment of impulse and enthusiasm, but carried out in spite of tremendous obstacles. To do this, our attention must for a while be turned to Constantinople, in order to trace the origin of events which prompted Amadeus of Savoy to risk life and limb in a cause which could in no way prove advantageous to him or to his country. These services, too, were performed for a person who certainly showed no appreciation of the sacrifices made on his behalf, and who repaid them with deliberate ingratitude and incivility.

Affairs in the East were yearly becoming more critical. The advancing of the Turk had at last convinced the Christian rulers of Constantinople of the need for active resistance. Less than a century was yet to elapse ere the Cross was to go down before the Crescent, and the foreshadowing of the impending doom was not to be mistaken. The threatening peril might have been averted had the Emperors of Byzantium only displayed some of the courage and energy that such an emergency ought to have aroused. But the feeble successors of Constantine, little able to cope with a foe whose craft and power and temerity hampered and depressed their waning capabilities, had but one resource; and that resource was the Pope of Rome. The Pope they regarded as omnipotent among the princes of the West; the Pope, they knew, sighed for the reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches; the Pope, they felt, was a friend to whom appeal would not be in vain.

At that time the Ottoman throne was

filled by Amurath I., who in 1359 had succeeded his father, the dread and powerful Orchan. John Paleologus was reigning as Emperor at Constantinople,—that is to say, if a weak and irresolute assertion of power can be called reigning. John was the son of Andronicus Paleologus the Younger and of Jane (or Anna, as she called herself when she became Empress of the East), daughter of Amadeus V.; consequently he was a first cousin of Amadeus VI. The Emperor John struggled feebly to resist Amurath when the latter took possession of Adrianople and established in that city the seat of his empire in Europe. An insurrection against Amurath in Asia gave John a short period of respite from the ceaseless advance of the Ottoman, for the Sultan, hastening to quell the rising, left the Emperor master of the situation and able for the time being to make some headway against the invader. John did his utmost to profit by the occasion. He at once resorted to arms and regained some of his lost possessions. He incited seditions and re-

bellions against Amurath, in the hope of driving him out of Europe and of reasserting the dominion of the Greek Empire. John's success was but short-lived. The Sultan returned from the East flushed with victory, and panting to chastise the audacity of the Christian monarch. The Turk was everywhere triumphant; the Emperor, in despair, applied for succour to Pope Urban V., whose sympathies he well knew would be enlisted on his behalf. He was not mistaken. The Pope was eager to preach a crusade against the followers of Mahomet; the union of the Churches was one of his most cherished dreams; and (however inconsistent the assertion may sound) his desire for peace in every land was the guiding instinct of his life. All these aims could be attained once the Ottoman power was crushed and driven out of Europe, and the House of Paleologus firmly seated at Constantinople.

But the Papal views were not shared by many, and found certainly fewer followers in Italy than elsewhere. The faithlessness

and deceit practised by the Greek Court had alienated many ; the professions so frequently made by the Emperors of Byzantium to consent to return to the faith of Rome had always been evaded, the schism always maintained ; the services rendered to these Eastern sovereigns in past times had never met with more than the feeblest recognition. Of what use was it to supply them with troops and money until, at all events, they had abjured their heresies and had returned in very deed to the true fold ? But Urban closed his ears to such protestations ; and an opportunity soon occurring that seemed to him favourable to his designs, he determined to make the most of it.

It was late in the month of March, 1363, and King John of France, King Peter of Cyprus, and Count Amadeus of Savoy were all assembled at Avignon to offer their respects to His Holiness and to observe the festival of Holy Week. The occasion was not one to be neglected ; the Holy Father straightway determined to profit by it, and to touch, if possible, the hearts of his

guests on a matter that interested him so deeply. In a long and elaborate address he spoke to them of the great work of Redemption, of the sufferings of our Lord, and of the example of self-denial and self-sacrifice set through these sufferings. On the Vigil of Good Friday he preached still further on these subjects, dwelling on the anguish which all the right-minded must feel when they reflected that the sites where the scenes of the Passion had been enacted were still in the hands of the infidels. So eloquently did Urban stir the hearts of his hearers that they all vowed to arm against the Turk, to drive the invaders from the land, and to succour the Greek Emperor in his distress.

This Crusade was preached far and wide throughout Europe. King John of France was named commander-in-chief of the forces, and many advantages, material as well as spiritual, were held out to those who consented to join this holy war. But the enterprise melted away almost entirely in the bubble and froth of talk. King John's untimely death the following year

(1364) extinguished all hope of assistance as far as France was concerned ; and the King of Cyprus, though desirous to fulfil the vow made at Avignon, only succeeded in raising a small force wherewith to carry out his purpose. With this, however, he sailed to Egypt and besieged and sacked Alexandria. He would have continued to add to his conquests if the more timorous of his followers had not persuaded him that his arms were insufficient to cope with those of the Sultan. He then gave up all idea of further action, and retired to his kingdom, satisfied that as a Crusader, at least, his conduct was above reproach.

Of the three princes who had sworn together at Avignon to attack the Ottoman power, Amadeus VI. alone remained. There were several important reasons which made him zealous to act up to his word. He was a man possessed of strong religious convictions. He was scrupulous as to the fulfilment of any resolution he had ever made, as the following example will serve to show. In early youth he had made a vow never to eat meat and fish

at the same time, and to fast every Friday and Saturday ; he abstained on those days even from eggs and cheese. From this vow he did not seek release until after he had observed it for several years, and then he applied to no less an authority than the Pope, from whom he might well expect no remittance at all, or only at a high rate of interest. This dispensation he demanded and obtained in 1360, when Pope Innocent VI. enjoined on him the task of feeding twelve poor people every Sunday as long as he lived ; on every All-Saints'-Day he was to feed and clothe twenty poor people ; and on every one of the days that he had observed as a fast day he was to recite ten " Paters " and ten " Aves." In addition to motives of religion inducing him to engage in the Crusade was his desire to help his cousin, John Paleologus. The Greek situation was becoming every day more critical, arousing the attention and even the compassion of several other European princes.

The death of King John of France, the shifts employed by the King of Cyprus to

hold himself excused from any further share in the Crusade, and the delay of Amadeus in carrying out his part of the bargain had rendered the Pope suspicious as to the Count's good faith. But matters of state had compelled the Green Count to devote himself exclusively to things at home. It was not till the spring of 1366 that he could put into execution the vow which he had taken three years previously, and which, in spite of the Pope's misgivings, he had ever held honourably in view.

Pope Urban had employed the interval in stirring up other princes to take part in the war, and he had been successful in obtaining promises of help from Charles IV., Emperor of Germany, and from Louis, King of Hungary. But the Emperor had neither time nor money for the undertaking; and King Louis, who had volunteered to march by land to the relief of the Emperor John, while Amadeus was to advance by sea, lost heart and threw up his share in the transaction.

But these defections only served to

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stimulate the chivalrous ardour of the Conte Verde. Having raised money for troops and transportation by dint of pawning his plate and jewels, together with some help from the Pope and from his brother-in-law, Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan, he arrived at Venice in May, 1366, where all who had agreed to aid in the Crusade were to meet him. Many of his own subjects proffered their services and supplied men and arms for the expedition ; the ranks were also joined by numbers of the mercenary troops who at that moment swarmed throughout Italy, and were composed of English, French, and Germans indiscriminately, all eager to fight and ready to sell their services to the highest bidder.

The regency of Savoy was entrusted during Amadeus's absence to his wife, Bonne of Bourbon. The esteem and affection that the Count felt for her are evident from the way in which the directions appointing her as regent are drawn up, and from the uncontrolled authority with which everything was left in her

hands. She was requested to represent her husband on all possible occasions ; her desires and decisions were to be law in all questions of finance and administration. A council was also instituted, consisting of seven nobles, with power to add to their number should this be the regent's pleasure ; but the councillors were by no means to fetter or bias the judgments she pronounced—they were merely to be at hand should any perplexity or argument arise in which Bonne might require an experience and a knowledge other than her own.

Having disposed matters in the way that he judged best for his country's welfare, Amadeus set off for Venice, where he arrived on June 11th, after having stopped some days at Pavia to visit his sister, the Duchess Blanche of Milan.

In Venice the Green Count visited many of the churches, kissing the holy relics that abounded in the city, and praying that his enterprise might receive the protection and blessing of Heaven. He then busied himself with the more practical

side of affairs and saw to the purchasing of food, medicines, and other necessities for his army. He next proceeded to divide his fleet into three parts, the centre division being under his own personal command; the vanguard under Stephen de la Beaume, Lord High Admiral of the Fleet; and the rear-guard under the Lord of Basset. On the 20th of June the whole force weighed anchor. An account of his departure is thus given in an old chronicle: "The people of Savoy having all arrived in Venice, and the day of embarkation being come, Count Amadeus adorned all his princes and cavaliers in suits of green velvet trimmed with rich embroidery of three true-lover's knots, devised by him; and, himself dressed in similar fashion, he came forth from his castle accompanied by the chief princes and barons, who followed him marching two abreast. At the head of the procession were musicians playing such a variety of instruments and producing withal so wonderful a harmony that the people of Venice were astounded at such magnifi-

cence, and flocked into the streets and squares to marvel over so adventurous a start. And around this incomparable display arose great acclamations from all the crowd, who shouted 'Savoia! Savoia!' while amid the sound of trumpets the Count weighed anchor and set out upon the sea."

Continuing his journey via Pola, he stopped at Ragusa, where the inhabitants, to mark their appreciation of his gallantry, presented him with gifts of sheep, torches, and candles. After the receipt of these homely and somewhat incongruous offerings, the Green Count advanced along the Dalmatian coast, touched at Corfu, landed at Modon, and again at Coron, and from there went on to Negropont. His next step was to besiege Gallipoli, and after a short but brilliant action, in which some of his nobles were killed, he remained master of the whole city. This victory, which is passed over in silence by the Byzantine writers, was a great one for Amadeus; and he lost no time in despatching messengers to Savoy to announce

his progress and the fact of his all-important conquest. For the possession of Gallipoli was of vital significance. Situated at the mouth of the Dardanelles and commanding the entrance to the Sea of Marmora and to the Bosphorus, its possession implied for Amadeus a freedom of action along the route he proposed to traverse. This gave him a mastery as to his after movements that it would be difficult to overrate.

Having left a garrison of his own men in the citadel, he set sail for Constantinople, where the news reached him that John Paleologus had been treacherously seized and imprisoned by Stratimir, King of Bulgaria. Some time previously John Paleologus had promised to abjure the schisms of his Church, and to place within the Pope's hands the formula whereby he pledged himself to the fulfilment of this renunciation. He had accordingly started for Buda, in order to hand over to King Louis of Hungary this guaranty, which the King in his turn was to transmit to Pope Urban V. In exchange for this

document, help was to flow in from all sides to support the Emperor against the infidel. Some of this succour was already on its way, in the person and troops of the Count of Savoy, while it was expected that more would soon arrive from the King of Hungary. The Emperor resolved to make the journey by land, thinking in this way to avoid the perils and inconveniences of a sea-voyage. He also imagined that since there was peace between his country and Bulgaria, he could pass through it unmolested. He accordingly set out without even taking so simple a precaution as to provide himself with an escort of troops. He reached as far as Widin, but there King Stratimir caused him to be arrested and imprisoned in the fortress of that town.

On learning this news, Amadeus at once took measures to march to his cousin's relief. The change of plans brought about by this alteration as to his destination involved a good deal of inconvenience and rearrangement, and some delay ensued before the changes required for this fresh

campaign could be completed. Several of the Count's ships had been damaged, either during the voyage or at the siege of Gallipoli, and the needed repairs had to be executed. Amadeus became aware, too, of the necessity of increasing the number of galleys, and for this addition to his forces not only time, but money, was required. John's wife, the Empress Helena, a daughter of Cantacuzenus, contributed two galleys and a sum of money towards the work of her husband's liberation; from public and private sources in Pera four other galleys were raised. Reinforced by these supplies, the Green Count, early in the month of October, set forth to the Emperor's rescue.

It was not till he reached Mesembria, the capital of Bulgaria, that he met with any opposition. His passage here being barred, he laid siege to the town, took it, and having placed a strong garrison in it, he exacted a heavy fine from the inhabitants wherewith to supply the wants of his own followers. He pursued the same measures towards the towns of Lanillo

and Lamona, and then proceeded to besiege Varna, the strongest fortress owned by the Bulgarians.

The success that had always accompanied Amadeus's arms, the handful of men whom he repeatedly led to victory, filled the heart of Stratimir with dismay; he shuddered lest he should be enfolded in the all-conquering circle of fire and sword with which this stranger was gradually surrounding his territory. He sent to propose overtures of peace. His offers were accepted, and Count Amadeus dictated the conditions upon which the troops of Savoy would consent to withdraw from the country, and to refrain from further hostilities. The principal conditions insisted on by the Green Count were three in number—the liberation of the Emperor John Paleologus, the liberation of the prisoners captured during the war, and the restitution of the conquered towns.

The first demand was immediately complied with. John Paleologus was at once set free, and accompanied by the Count's plenipotentiaries, left Widin to join his

cousin at Mesembria. But the other stipulations were not carried out in full, notwithstanding the promise given by the Bulgarian monarch to that effect.

Early in January, 1367, Count Amadeus and the Emperor John met at the town of Sissopolis, not far from Mesembria, and they remained there together till the end of March of that same year. During these three months the Count was obliged to board and lodge himself ; in no way was he treated as the guest or relative or deliverer of the man whom he had so generously restored to liberty. From there they proceeded to Constantinople, where Amadeus, instead of residing in the Imperial palace, had again to provide for himself as best he could in the friendly quarters of the Genoese in the suburb of Pera. It is touching to read of him in Constantinople, occupied in giving honourable sepulture to those of his friends and dependents who had fallen in action or had succumbed to sickness during the campaign. Among those who were buried in the Church of the "Fрати Minori" at

Pera were his shield-bearer and his cook; besides others of more exalted birth and profession; for one and all the Conte Verde provided that prayer should be offered for the eternal rest of their souls.

But the Count of Savoy's adventure in the East was drawing to a close. Eleven months had passed away since he sailed from Venice; the troops that followed him had been retained for one year only, and were eager to receive their pay and go off in search of fresh laurels. The Green Count had no choice left but to satisfy their clamours, and to arrange as best he might for his own return to Savoy. There was not the slightest indication of the gratitude which he rightfully expected from the Emperor. John was not capable of any such feeling; he seemed to resent rather than to recognise all that the Count had done for him. The small sum of money which the Emperor consented to pay towards the enormous expenses incurred on his account was wrung from him with difficulty. The question of paying both officers and men was a

serious one for Amadeus VI., for the expenses that he had been obliged to incur had been heavy. The promised supplies fell far short of the requirements ; when the time came for the disbanding of his troops, his exchequer proved totally inadequate to bear the strain. But the Conte Verde was too just, as well as too generous, to allow those who had taken service under him to go away disappointed ; by strenuous efforts and at great personal sacrifices he discharged every debt owed by him to his followers. So, having done all, and more than all, that could be asked of honour, valour, and generosity, he set sail from Constantinople on June 4, 1367, and landed in Venice the last day of July. He remained in Venice till the 23d of August, winding up the affairs of his Eastern expedition.

While there, he sent to his wife a present to prove that in his absence he had remembered her fondly. The transportation of this gift must have cost him some difficulty and anxiety. It was a parrot ! There is something almost pathetic in this

gift of Amadeus to his wife. His finances were exhausted by the sums of money he had had to pay towards the expenses of his expedition; he had drawn largely on his credit; and the wares of stuffs and precious stones that the markets of the East paraded before him in tempting abundance had all, owing to his penury, to be set aside and refused. A parrot was the only present the Green Count could allow himself to give to his wife; and we can but hope that the Countess Bonne accepted the gift at its full value, and realised the self-denial and devotion represented in her husband's offering.

From Venice Amadeus travelled to Rome by slow stages; he was accompanied by the ambassadors whom John Paleologus had deputed to lay before the Pope the assurance that the following year he would come in person to submit the peculiarities of his Church to His Holiness, and to take the oath renouncing the schisms which separated him from Rome. Amadeus was received in the Eternal City with acclamations and rejoicings. It was true that the

object of a direct Crusade against the Turk had not been literally carried into execution, but the force of circumstances, not the bent of personal inclination, had brought about this result. The Count's triumph, on the other hand, was greater than could have been anticipated. He had gone with a handful of men, bound to do him service for the limited space of only twelve months, and in that time he had not sustained one defeat nor met with one disaster. The all-important stronghold of Gallipoli had fallen before his victorious arms ; he had freed the Emperor of Constantinople from a distant and ignominious prison ; he had conquered a whole province and several towns. All this had been done without any external help worthy of the name, and in the heart of a hostile and unknown country. Well might Savoy glory in such a ruler, and chronicle with pride the valour and chivalry of the Conte Verde. At the time, his reward, however, was small, so far, at least, as outward recognition went. No Byzantine historian records his feats ; no Grecian

writer extols his daring. There is not even an allusion in the pages of any Eastern chronicler to the "Veni, vidi, vici," of the Count of Savoy. The historians of the House of Paleologus were all too narrow-minded to publish the exploits of a prince who was not of their nationality, and too prejudiced to admit the chivalry and boldness of a general who was not of their race or creed. Their fairness could not reach to such a point as to acknowledge that they owed the rescue of their Emperor to the valour of an outsider. Were it not for the Papal correspondence on the subject, and for the exact and minute entries found in the records of the Savoyard treasury (where a strict account is kept of the expenditure), this expedition to the East might be considered a myth. But these documents are extant, and prove beyond all dispute the facts of the expedition; they are replete with details of such accuracy and local colouring that it is impossible to doubt their authenticity.

Although Amadeus's actions received such scant recognition from the writers

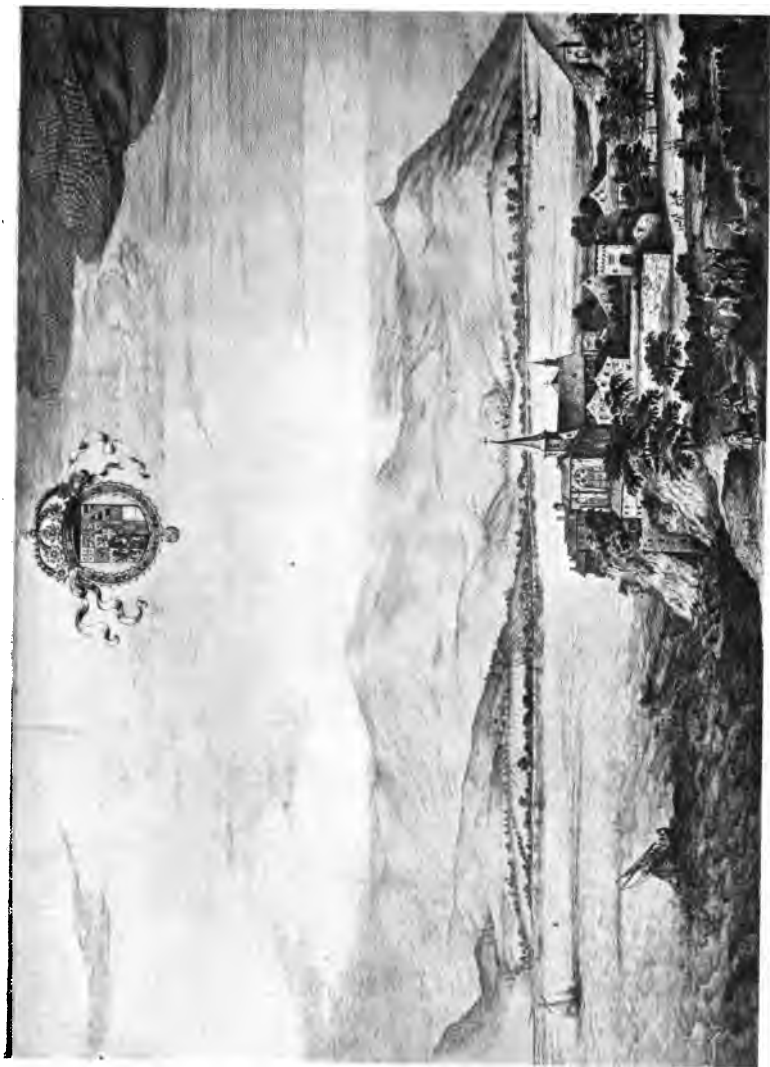
of his day, his fame has come down to the present time with increased appreciation ; the result obtained by him as to the probable reunion of the Churches gained for him the gratitude of Pope Urban V. ; his success as a general has earned the respect of posterity.

The chivalry and love of fighting which were the guiding instincts of Amadeus VI.'s life led to his premature death. His readiness to grant any appeal for help, especially if it involved a call to arms, induced him to consent to support the cause of Louis of Anjou in Naples. Louis had been named by Queen Joanna as heir to the throne of Naples. On the occasion of Joanna's murder by Charles of Durazzo, Louis determined to assert his rights and avenge his benefactress. Many of the princes of Europe espoused his cause, and the Conte Verde of Savoy was among those who judged the cause a just one. He resolved to support it with a force of 2000 lances, under his personal command. He set off towards the end of the year 1382, but before he reached Naples, the

plague which was decimating the troops of Anjou claimed him as its victim, and he died in a small village in Apulia on March 1, 1383. He was only forty-nine years old at the time of his death, and his loss was considered irreparable, both for the campaign in which he was engaged and for his country. His body was embalmed, placed in a huge coffin of cypress wood, and brought back to Hautecombe, where he was buried with great pomp, all the European Powers sending their representatives to assist at the obsequies of a prince who was universally beloved.

This short sketch of a life which deserves a more elaborate notice must not be brought to a close without alluding, however briefly, to the famous order instituted by Amadeus, and which is in vogue to this day. He had first instituted the Order of the Black Swan, in 1362, but this institution was only short-lived. Twelve years after, arose in its place the one known in its earliest times as the Order of the Collar of Savoy (from the similarity of its insignia to a dog's collar), but

now called the Order of the Santissima Annunziata, or the Annonciade. Its original insignia consisted of a band of gold about two inches wide, with the letters "F. E. R. T." repeated several times over between bows of true-lover's knots. These letters now adorn the Italian five-franc pieces. The meaning of this word "F. E. R. T." remains a mystery to this day. Some explanations maintain that the initials stand for "Fortitudo Eius Rhodum Tenuit" (His Valour Kept Rhodes), in allusion to the defence of the island of Rhodes made by Amadeus V., who, in 1311, commanded the Knights of Rhodes against an army of Saracens; but it has been denied that Amadeus took part in that defence. It is also claimed that twenty years earlier Amadeus V. led the Knights in their defence of Acre against the Moslems. No other explanations have yet arisen of sufficient authority to solve the problem absolutely, though a conjecture that the word is taken from the Latin verb "ferre," and signifies "he brings," is not devoid of probability. The



VIEW OF HAUTECOMBE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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use of the verb "ferre" in mottoes is shown in the fact that the town of Cuneo placed the gerund "ferendo" (bringing), over its coat of arms. It may be that fancy in those days delighted to take such a word and let the imagination call up a host of surmises as to all the happiness and success that the heroic knight might *bring* to his home or country.

At the breaking out of the war for the independence and unity of Italy, the old motto of "F. E. R. T." was twisted into an expression of expectancy with regard to Victor Emmanuel II., and lent itself to the following interpretation: "Fiat Emmanuel Rex Tuus."

There is another interpretation of the meaning of the letters F. E. R. T., associated with the Sardinian Knot. It is claimed that they refer to an ancient motto used in the heraldry of the House of Savoy—"Fœdere et religione tene-mur" (By bond and faith we are held).¹

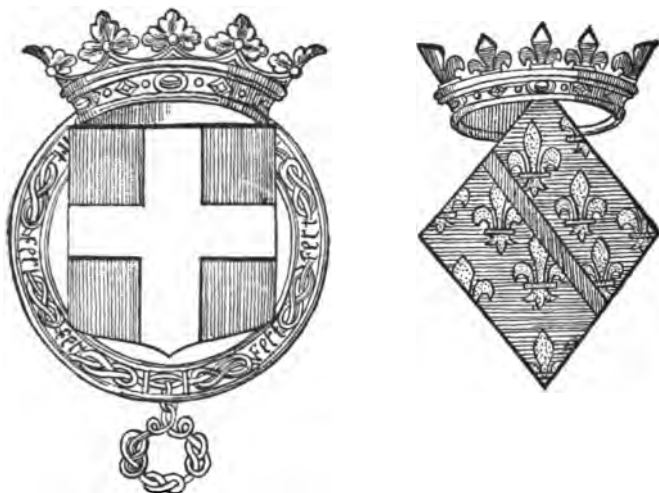
The Order of the Collar underwent great changes in the reign of Duke Charles

¹ See Appendix.

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the Good, when in the pendant, formed of three love-knots, which hung on the wearer's breast, he added the image of "Our Lady of the Annunciation," from whom the order then took its name.¹ At the time of its institution, Amadeus limited the membership of the Order of the Collar to fifteen knights.

¹ See Appendix.



ARMS OF THE "CONTE VERDE" AND HIS WIFE, BONNE OF BOURBON.

CHAPTER IV

1360-1391

THE "CONTE ROSSO" (THE RED COUNT),
AMADEUS VII. THE RED COUNT AND HIS
TOURNEY AT BOURBOURG. HIS OVER-
THROW OF THREE ENGLISH EARLS. HIS
DEATH. SUSPICIONS RELATING TO HIS
DEATH

THERE is a similarity between the characters of the "Green Count" and the "Red Count," as Amadeus VI. and Amadeus VII. called themselves; the father took his name from the colour he made so specially his own, and the son did precisely the same. Their tastes, also, in many respects were alike; the love of fighting, the instinct for all that was chivalrous and courteous, the passion for tournaments and knightly exercises, were equally pronounced in both, while the greatness of character which distinguished

Amadeus VI. would have been, probably, no less marked in Amadeus VII. but for his early death at the opening of his career.

The Conte Rosso, as Amadeus VII. was called, from his preference for the colour which he always wore in the lists, gave early proof of his skill and valour as a soldier. In order to test his powers, his father had assigned to him the lands of Bauge and of Bresse, bidding him to defend them against the incursions of his neighbour and relative, the King of France. But the lord, whose suzerain Amadeus had become, refused the homage due to the young Prince, who in his perplexity and inexperience sent to his father inquiring as to the line of action that he should pursue. The Green Count answered his son's messengers angrily. "Return to Amadeus," said he, "and tell him that if he fails to reduce the Lord of Beaujeu to the subjection owed by him for the lands of Bresse, he will have neither part nor parcel in my possessions; and say no more."

The reply served its purpose; the young



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Count, spurred by his father's words, carried the war so hotly into his adversary's quarters that the Lord of Beaujeu saw fit to surrender, and solicited the good graces of the Duke of Burgundy in bringing about a reconciliation with his offended suzerain.

The young Count's services were soon afterwards required in Flanders, whither Charles VI. of France had gone to repress a rising at Ghent, and whence he had applied for help to Amadeus VI. But the Conte Verde was about to start on that fatal expedition to Naples which resulted in his death, and in his stead, he deputed his son, who arrived in time to take a brilliant share in the battle of Rosebecque (1382).

The Flemish campaign ended, the Red Count returned to his domain, where he found his vassals again in revolt. He lost no time in asserting his rights, remaining victorious in every action. He was about to carry his conquests farther, when the news of his father's death reached him. "Amadeus VI.," writes a modern historian, "the great captain, the perfect

knight, the strong athlete, he who in his zeal for religion had carried his glorious and victorious arms against the Turks and the Bulgarians, and had reinforced the Empire of the East, died miserably in a small village in Apulia."¹

This catastrophe had a less important effect on the life of 'Amadeus VII. than might have been expected. At the moment of his death the Conte Verde, from the intense esteem and love he bore his wife, Bonne of Bourbon, had bequeathed into her hands the administration of the state, ordering his subjects to continue to her that fealty and devotion which they had shown to him. To these dying injunctions of his father the Conte Rosso did all in his power to conform. He agreed to defer his decisions to those of his mother, and to abide by her counsels and wishes. This arrangement was faithfully carried out on his side; but the Countess Bonne did not fulfil her part of the compact, and rarely showed

¹ Cibrario, *L.*, *Operette e Frammenti Storici*, cap. i., p. 9, Firenze, 1856.

any signs of desiring her son's co-operation. Regardless of her covenants, she signed decrees and acts in her own name, which became law in Savoy without the consensus of the reigning Count, and she ruled absolutely. Fortunately for the peace of the country, Amadeus VII. was not eager to grasp the reins of office. His mother's rule left him more leisure for the jousts and tourneys he loved, and in which he excelled.

Soon after his father's death, partly for the excuse of being unfettered by the cares of government, partly to indulge his love of fighting and to help a relative, Amadeus went once more to the assistance of King Charles of France, who had returned to Flanders, where his subjects—backed, as on a former occasion, by English arms and gold—had risen in revolt. The accounts of the way in which the Count of Savoy met the English in tournament might be galling to English pride, were it not that grave doubts exist as to the trustworthiness of the Savoyard chronicler.

The chronicler relates that during an interval in the siege of Bourbourg (a small village near Gravelines, then occupied by the English), the Red Count instituted a tournament in which, according to the fashion of that day, besiegers and besieged alike took part. Among the English knights was one distinguished for arrogance, who, having made obeisance to the King, showed him a device worked in pearls, upon his breast—two doves holding in their beaks a gold chain, with a pendant ring formed of a splendid single ruby surrounded by twelve diamonds. The knight explained that a princess, as exalted in rank as she was good and beautiful, had given him the ring as a New Year's gift, with the condition that he should not place it on his finger unless, by the first day of the following year, he had overcome twelve youths of as high a pedigree as his own ; he was to conquer these with no other weapon than the lance. The tale of the vanquished knights, he added, was now almost complete, and he had come to see whether among that host,

where he knew well the flower of chivalry was to be found, a knight would be ready to couch a lance against him. Truth compelled him to state—modesty apart—that he was so consummate a master in his art that a blow dealt by him would mean death to the recipient, or a condition wherefrom he could never hope to recover. Should he be successful in his enterprise, the princess would then allow of his wearing the ring in token of the love between them; should he be vanquished, however, the conqueror would lead him to his lady, who would straightway deliver the ring to the victor.

All who heard this speech became indignant. The Count of Savoy appealed to the King of France for leave to measure himself against this haughty Englishman, “who,” he remarked sarcastically, “should have been fed on guns and iron.”

The King smilingly told his fair cousin that this was an honour over great for the Earl of Hedinton,¹ as the arrogant knight

¹ Haddington.

is styled in the chronicle ; that he could not allow so exalted a personage, nearly allied by ties of consanguinity to his own sacred person, to enter into competition with a man not even the equal of many of the vassals in the train of the Count of Savoy. Among those at the parley were the Earl of Pembroke and the Earl of Arundel, who had come to break a lance in honour of their "ladies fair." Their annoyance on hearing the insolent words of their countryman was great ; they drew him aside, pointing out that his arrogance could only bring discredit upon the whole nation ; that they marvelled much at His Majesty deigning to hear him to the end ; and that he should have ordered the coxcomb to be kicked with contumely from his presence.

The knight, overcome by their words and recognising the truth of their remarks, was taken with much contrition ; he knelt before the King and implored him with many tears to pardon him and to obtain also his pardon from the rest of the host. The pardon granted, the French monarch

would fain have found a champion to strive with him in the person of a certain knight from Saintonge ; but Hedinton begged that he might try his arms against those of the Red Count, from whom defeat—should he have to endure it—would yet be a greater honour than should he overthrow a hundred knights of his own degree. The King would have refused his request, but the Count, keen for the fray, begged with such insistence and was seconded so warmly in his entreaties by the Duke of Bourbon that the monarch gave way and permitted the encounter.

So the Count of Savoy appeared in the lists, supported by the Dukes of Berry, Bourbon, Anjou, Bretagne, and Alençon, by the Counts of Armagnac, Vendôme, and Geneva, by the Seigneurs of Chalcant, Valperga, and St. Martin, and by many other barons besides. Amadeus VII., being still in mourning for his father, was dressed in black velvet, but his housings and accoutrements were all richly embroidered with love-knots in gold, with the letters F. E. R. T. worked in pearls,

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rubies, diamonds, and other precious stones. His helm, whereon was a golden crown set with jewels and surmounted with his crest of a lion's skull, winged, was borne by the Count of Armagnac. Meanwhile Hedinton stood ready to defend his precious ring, which he had placed upon a column draped in cloth of gold. The two champions put on their helmets, and drawing their visors down, they made obeisance to the King.

“ Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are pray'd,
Their lances in the rest are laid,
They meet in mortal shock.”¹

The blows fell fast and furious, and Amadeus, who in his haste had dealt his blows at random, received a slight wound. This taught him prudence. A well-aimed blow soon gave him a decided advantage; horse and man went down before him, and Hedinton remained so long stretched upon the ground that, had the Red Count chosen, he could have borne off the ring.

¹ Scott, *Marmion*, canto ii.

But with a courtesy equalled only by his valour, he refrained, and seeing his adversary still prostrate, he ordered the attendants to revive him with vinegar and rose-water. When the fallen knight had been restored, Count Amadeus mounted him on a fresh steed, saying : " Now, defend yourself if you do not wish me to carry off the ring." The knight replied : " Before you touch it I will deal you a blow such as the one you dealt to me !"

The combat was renewed, and the knights charged with such fury that steeds and riders hurtled in a mass to the ground. Disentangled and remounted by their shield-bearers, they fell to fighting afresh, and they fought so desperately for the whole of that day that they broke no less than forty-seven lances. So says the chronicle, and it goes on to relate that at last the Count of Savoy transixed his adversary's shoulder with his lance, and Hedinton then owned himself beaten. The Count, however, refused to take possession of the ring, but praised his foe,

and by gracious words strove to soften the bitterness of the overthrow.

The Red Count's next feat of arms was with swords against the Earl of Arundel. As the English Earl was said to excel in fencing, the odds were in his favour ; but skill was vain against the "sparkle of sword-play splendid" of Count Amadeus.

"The long, lithe sword in his hand became
As a leaping light, as a falling flame,
As a fire through the flax that hasted ;
Slender and shining and beautiful,
How it shored through shivering casque and skull,
And never a stroke was void and null,
And never a thrust was wasted."¹

The Count's sword did indeed cleave through the "casque and skull" of the unfortunate Earl so deeply that it pierced his brain.

Count Amadeus had a third foe to encounter in the Earl of Pembroke, whose weapon was the battle-axe. For many hours the issue was doubtful. Worn with the struggle, the Englishman confessed himself vanquished. Amadeus, to show

¹ A. Lindsay Gordon, *The Rhyme of Foyous Garde*.

himself a courteous foe, presented the Earl of Pembroke with a gold chain, bidding him wear it in remembrance of the giver. He also gave him a beautiful diamond, begging him on his return to England to greet the lady in whose cause he had fought so gallantly and to entreat her to accept the jewel as a token of her knight's valour.

Compared with so bright a scene of chivalry and romance as the earlier years of Count Amadeus's life present, his early death gives a tragic contrast. Of his political career, with the acquisition to his country of the town and province of Nice and the consequent gain to Savoy of a seaboard, it is not now the time to speak, nor of the encroaching temper of his mother, whose ambition was so widely recognised that evil rumours at the time of her son's death asserted that she connived at it, if she did not instigate it. But such reports, too horrible almost to be repeated, have been proved to be false in the light of modern research.

In 1377, when barely seventeen years

old, the Count of Savoy had married Bonne, daughter of the Duke of Berry and of Jeanne d'Armagnac. Between the Bonnes, the elder, Bonne of Bourbon, known as Madame la Grande, and the younger, Bonne of Berry, called Madame la Jeune, to distinguish her from her mother-in-law, there existed for a while a strange union. Both had to complain of Amadeus VII.—the wife, because her husband did not bestow on her all the love she had a right to expect; the mother, because her son showed too much interest in affairs of state, and was ready to bestir himself in matters which she considered her exclusive prerogative. The two women put their heads together to obtain by magic the result that seemed otherwise beyond their grasp. They resolved to invoke the black art, and by its glamour and mystic charms to effect the miracle that their entreaties and coaxings had failed to bring about naturally. The age was one when spells and incantations exercised a powerful hold over the minds of even the most enlightened, and any one



AVIGLIANO, BIRTHPLACE OF AMADEUS VII., THE "CONTE ROSSO."

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possessing these powers was sought after and honoured in a way that it is now difficult to credit. A little knowledge of herbs, aromatics, and chemicals, a smattering of barbarous Latin, a reputation for having travelled in other lands and learned "the art that none may name . . . far beyond the sea,"—these served to make one an adept in the "healing art" and a "magician" who would restore health to the sick and youth to the old, who would convert hatred into love, who would turn the affections without the knowledge or will of their owner. The position filled by persons who would not now succeed even as quacks, but who then were esteemed as physicians, was easily attained. The two Bonnes easily found such a man, and in their infatuation they saw the charm already working.

Shortly before this time, the Duke of Bourbon, brother of Madame Bonne la Grande, had undertaken an expedition to Africa. Among his followers was a strolling charlatan who called himself John of Granville, and who declared himself to be

a son of the Lord of Granville, whose property was situated in the diocese of Prague. He was born, he said, in Bohemia, but had studied seven years in Padua. He had also been assistant to the physician of the King of Hungary ; then he had travelled to Rome in the German Emperor's suite ; his later wanderings had led him to Prussia with the Duke of Austria ; he had also been in the service of the Emperor, of the Marquis of Moravia, of the Count of Foix ; he had resided at Montpellier, at Toulouse, and finally at Marseilles, where he had joined the Duke of Bourbon.

At the conclusion of the African campaign, Granville was advised to try his fortune in Savoy, where the Countess Bonne la Grande would doubtless receive him favourably, both by reason of his high credentials and for her brother's sake. In an evil moment for himself and for Savoy he followed this advice, and in June, 1391, he was recommended by the elder Bonne to present himself to her son, who was then at Moutiers, in the Tarantasia.

The Red Count needed a skilled physician, as he was suffering from two maladies. The Count's illnesses were, in sooth, somewhat difficult to deal with, the more so as the root of both complaints was deep-seated, lying in the Count's vanity. His complexion was bad, and his hair was very thin. To the man who would make him of a ruddy countenance, and save him from becoming bald, no reward could be too great.

Granville was crafty enough to understand quickly the people with whom he had to deal. He ingratiated himself with Madame la Grande and Madame la Jeune ; by flattering assurances he gained complete control over the mind of the luckless Count as well. Granville began by prescribing a succession of harmless beverages and pillules, and had he devoted himself wholly to this treatment, though the hair and complexion might never have been improved, the later evils would never have occurred.

But all were impatient for some result. Bonne of Bourbon was eager that her son

should betake himself to the war against his Waldensian subjects, where at a safe distance from home he could no longer interfere in the government; Bonne of Berry sighed for the effects of the love-philtre that would restore the love and devotion which her erring imagination made her fancy were lacking in her husband; and Amadeus himself craved for those outward and visible signs of youth and comeliness that, alas! were never again to be restored. Granville, too, felt that the time had come to make proof of his professions; he realised that he was not acting up to the expectations of the wife and mother, and that the Count also was impatient for some manifestation of his skill. He resolved, therefore, upon a decisive measure. After shaving Amadeus's head, he exposed it to the fire, washed it with a mixture of myrrh and yolk of egg, rubbed the cranium so violently with assafœtida that the Count felt as if the skin were being torn from the skull, and then applied a scalding poultice of honey, assafœtida, betony, and

other things, while he gave him an internal potion of opium, fennel, "galenga," marjoram, coriander, pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and other aromatic and stimulating herbs. A treatment of execrable blundering began from that moment, increasing as time went on. All looked only to the goal of their ambitions or desires, regardless of the measures adopted to reach them.

The Red Count's health began to suffer under this extraordinary accumulation and variety of medicines and ointments. The last act in the drama reached its consummation in the shape of an unguent prepared by Granville, and consisting of laurel oil mixed with hellebore, pepper, mustard, euphorbium, and half an ounce of verdigris. The poisonous nature of the larger part of the ingredients would, in themselves, point to a deliberate attempt on the Count's life were it not that we read that this unguent was prepared from a recognised and approved prescription, drawn up in form and supplied by one Pierre de Lompnes, the Court chem-

ist. No mystery was observed as to the compound; its use was known and sanctioned by many.

On the evening of Saturday, October the 21st, the Count came in from hunting (some writers maintain that a fall from his horse that day was the real cause of his death) with his jaws tightly locked together, his tongue swollen and covered with blisters; he suffered much pain. On the following Wednesday he took to his bed. The agonies endured by the Count revealed to him the nature of this attack. The strange fascination he had felt for Granville was now turned to loathing. On Friday the physician came to him carrying in his hand a unicorn's horn, which in those days was supposed to possess great medical properties against poison. The Count instantly ordered him out of the room, and gave a command that he was never again to be admitted into his presence. Amadeus also recalled how Granville had once told him that during his travels in Barbary and Greece the inhabitants of those countries had im-

pressed on him that the man they feared above all others was the Count of Savoy, since it was recorded in their chronicles that their empire would one day be overturned by a count of Savoy. The dying man was firmly persuaded that Granville was but a tool in the hands of those unknown and distant foes, and he ordered the Seigneurs of Cossonay and of Grandson, and a few others of his Council, to seize the leech and examine him under torture. The courtiers having retired from the bedchamber, the Count said to Jean d'Anghiers, his barber : "Elas, il sieyra moult mal sen vous len leissiez aler, et sil sen vait ainsi sans savoir la verité, a tant de joyne gent come vous estes yci." He then added : "If that doctor had done to one of them what he has done to me, I would have wrung from him the justice and the vengeance due for such a deed with my own hands."

But the Count's injunctions were unheeded. His councillors and his friends would admit of no suspicions as to Granville's conduct ; they ascribed their master's

orders to a state of frenzy caused by his sufferings, and they refused to conform to the ravings of delirium. The wretched Prince, seeing his commands disregarded, exclaimed again and again: "Oylas! je suis ferus en males mains;" while to his groom, Aniquino, he said: "I know well that this traitor of a doctor has not done this out of his own head, but to exalt some one else. Be watchful, therefore, to prevent his escape, for I know that the horses are already saddled, and that he would fain be off and away." The servant, seeing his master's paroxysms of pain, exclaimed: "Have I your leave, O Sire, to kill him?" Whereupon the Count replied: "Beware you do nothing of the sort, for that would be too small a vengeance. But sorely do I long to know who urged him to such a deed, for by my soul's salvation I swear that I owe my death to him."

He then went on to say to Henri de la Fléchère and other attendants that were about him, that this villain had determined to exterminate his whole race as well as

himself. He, Granville, had told the Count that he was about to prepare a beverage for him and his wife which would augment and strengthen their progeny, and that he meant to shave his son's head and dress it in a manner to cure him of squinting. The sufferer added: "This impostor had likewise the impertinence to say that I had no love for mother, wife, nor children, nor for any of my nearest kin." To such calumnies the Count had replied: "Thou liest! And I swear by the grace that I look for, that should the Countess, my wife, die, I should wish to die in that selfsame hour."

To his oft-repeated inquiries as to whether his orders to put the physician to the torture had been executed, the reply was given that they awaited the commands of the Countess, his mother. "Ohime! this is but poor comfort," was his remark; "she is tender-hearted; the leech will weep and nothing will be done."

The morning of All-Saints'-Day he called to him the Lord of Cossonay, and sent him

to his mother, imploring her to sanction the doctor's arrest, and learn from him why he had done such a deed. He prayed Cossonay to remind the Countess that he, the dying man, was her son, whom she should love above any one else, and whose word was more deserving of belief than all the protestations of the doctor. Cossonay went on his errand, with the result that the Countess began to weep; Cossonay did the same, and—as the Count had predicted—nothing was done. All this took place at Ripaille, on the Lake of Geneva, and on that same day Amadeus VII. died. Bishops and other dignitaries of the Church were present to speed his parting soul, but no record is extant to show that his wife or mother was with him at that supreme hour, or indeed at any moment during his last struggles and sufferings.

The appearance of the Count's body after death bore all the indications of poison. The whole of the back was marked with black spots, and looked as though it had been beaten; the nails on the hands were also black. The words uttered at

different moments by the dying man were now recollected, quoted, and passed from mouth to mouth ; and then, when all hope was past, all remedy useless, measures were set on foot to discover the authors of the crime. Suspicion fell on high and low alike, and the wildest charges were laid, especially against the Countess Bonne of Bourbon, the mother of the murdered Prince.

Confronted by this terrible accusation, Bonne la Grande made vigorous efforts to prove her innocence. She laid the case before the Prince of Achaia, desiring him, as the head of one branch of the House of Savoy, to investigate the matter, and empowering him to proceed legally against the authors of the murder. A commission was accordingly instituted ; the events related above were brought to light ; and the enlightened commissioners decided that, although the unguents prepared for the Count did certainly partake of a poisonous character, Granville had only employed them to promote the growth of Count Amadeus's hair. In

spite of this decision, the physician was put to the torture, and under the agonies of the rack he confessed all that his inquisitors wished and intended him to say, and he included the Countess Mother among the instigators of the deed. In consequence of this avowal, his life was spared.

Granville, nevertheless, was kept a long time in confinement, and put to the torture more than once. For a subsequent confession, wrung from him, declares that the Count's mother had asked him to prescribe something fitted to incapacitate her son from attending to state affairs, and that they had jointly concocted certain potions and ointments which would paralyse his limbs. The plotters foresaw no difficulty in administering these medicines, knowing that from eagerness to improve his complexion the Count would take everything offered for the purpose without any demur. Granville explained how he had then devised the treatment narrated, adding that the violent extremes of hot internal medicines joined to cold external applications

would produce paralysis ; and that besides these receipts for her son, Madame la Grande had asked him to supply her with drugs, either in powder or otherwise, whereby she might avenge herself, if need be, on her enemies. The accommodating leech had complied with this request. He concluded by denouncing as another accomplice in the Duke's death, Pierre de Lompnes, the chemist who had made up Granville's prescriptions, and who, as the latter declared, was deeper in Madame's confidence than any other man in the world.

On his death-bed, however, Maitre Jean de Granville made another and a widely different confession. He recanted all his former declarations, and maintained that those confessions had been wrung from him by the agony of the rack ; that they were all false ; that Bonne of Bourbon had neither share nor intention in her son's death ; and that Pierre de Lompnes was entirely guiltless of any participation in the tragedy.

His recantation came too late as far as

Pierre was concerned. The poor chemist, having admitted that he had made up the medicines and ointments according to Granville's directions, was condemned to death ; he was dragged to the galleys, tied to a donkey's tail (the donkey having been borrowed for the purpose from a Jew !), hanged, drawn, and quartered. In after years, when the wretched man's innocence was established and proclaimed, Amadeus VIII. ordered his body to be taken up from the criminals' burying-ground, where it had been consigned ; it was then interred with all the rites of the Church, amid full declarations of his innocence.¹

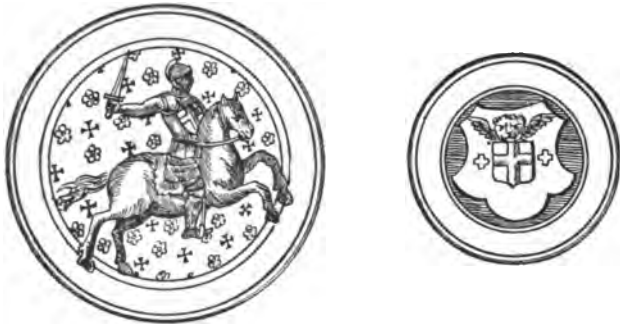
The confessions exonerating Countess Bonne la Grande strengthened the proofs which had come to light, absolving her from complicity in her son's death. That she was foolish, ignorant, and ambitious is undoubted ; that she was wicked and guilty is another question. Her chief accuser, be it remembered, was a man as ignorant and mistaken as herself ; a man who, under the awful trial of the rack, uttered

¹ See Appendix.

things which he retracted when dying, with all the emphasis and solemnity that the occasion called forth ; and who, had he been in earnest about the murder of Count Amadeus, either for his own purposes, or those of others, assuredly would have compassed his ends in a less apparent and less clumsy manner. An impartial examination of all that is definitely known of the Countess Bonne of Bourbon tends to throw a favourable light upon her character. She had many qualities which entitle her to respect. These earned for her the regard and confidence of her husband, her son, and the people of Savoy. She was adored by her husband, the Conte Verde ; her son, as we have seen, spoke of her as a tender-hearted woman ; while the position to which she was shortly raised, as guardian of her grandson, Amadeus VIII., and regent of the state during his minority, shows that she enjoyed the undiminished confidence of the people who voluntarily chose her as their ruler. Would the life and education of the young Amadeus have been entrusted

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to hands steeped in his father's blood?
Would the rival factions of Madame la
Grande and Bonne la Jeune have united
in selecting the former, had they not recognised her fitness to train their young
prince in all the highest and noblest traditions of the House of Savoy?



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